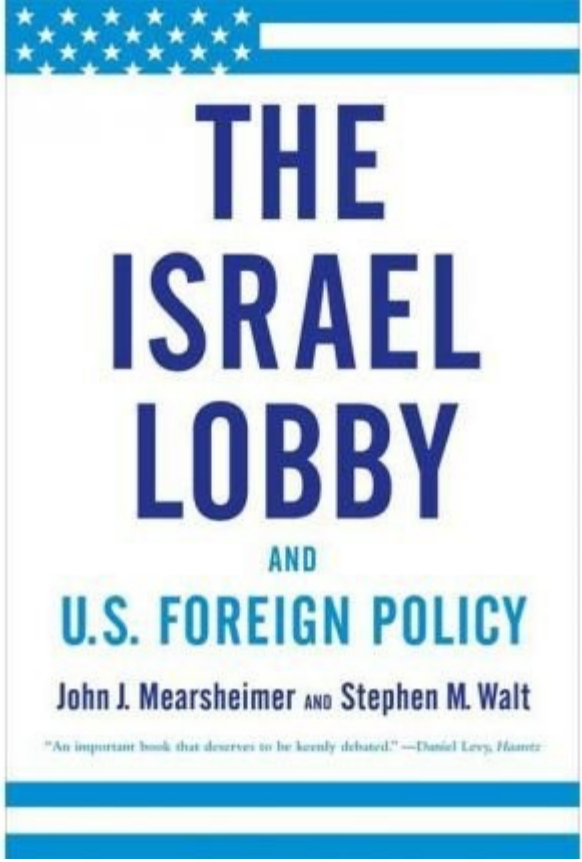
THE
ISRAEL
LOBBY
AND
U.S. FOREIGN POLICY
John J. Mearsheimer AND Stephen M. Walt
"An important book that deserves to be keenly debated." —Daniel Levy, Haaretz

VISIT...

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WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE ISRAEL LOBBYON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY-AND IS IT INAMERICA'S NATIONAL INTEREST?

"The Israel Lobby," by John J. Mearsheimer of theUniversity of Chicago and Stephen M.Walt of Harvard'sJohn F. Kennedy School of Government, was one of themost controversial articles in recent memory. Originallypublished in the London Review of Books in March 2006,the essay provoked both howls of outrage and cheersof gratitude for examining one of the most taboo issuesin America: the impact of the Israel lobby on U.S.foreign policy. According to The New York Times Magazine,it "slammed into the opinion-making world witha Category 5 force."

Now, in a work of major importance, Mearsheimerand Walt deepen and expand their argument and confrontrecent developments in the Middle East. Theydescribe the remarkable level of material and diplomaticsupport that the United States provides to Israel andargue that this support cannot be fully explained oneither strategic or moral grounds. This exceptional relationshipis due largely to the political influence of a loosecoalition of individuals and organizations that activelyworks to steer US . foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction.Mearsheimer and Walt provocatively contend thatthe lobby has a far-reaching impact on America's posturethroughout the Middle East—in Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Lebanon—and toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and thatthe policies it has encouraged are profoundly damagingto both America's national interests and Israel's

longtermsecurity. The lobby's influence also affects America'srelationship with important allies and increases the dangersthat all states face from global jihadist terror.

Writing in The New York Review of Books, MichaelMassing declared, "Not since Foreign Affairs magazinepublished Samuel Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilizations?'in 1993 has an academic essay detonated withsuch force." The publication of The Israel Lobby and U.S.Foreign Policy is certain to widen the debate at a timewhen there is no more urgent issue than America's rolein the Middle East.

JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER is the R. Wendell HarrisonDistinguished Service Professor of Political Science andthe codirector of the Program on International SecurityPolicy at the University of Chicago. He has publishedseveral books, including The Tragedy of Great Power Politics.

STEPHEN M. WALT is theProfessor of International Affairs at the John F. KennedySchool of Government at Harvard University and wasacademic dean of the Kennedy School from 2002 to2006. He is the author of Taming American Power: TheGlobal Response to U.S. Primacy, among other books.

Praise for John J. Mearsheimer's

THE TRAGEDY OF GREAT POWER POLITICS

"Mearsheimer marshals enormous evidence and sophisticatedlogic to make an impressive case for his theory."—Samuel P. Huntington, Harvard University

"[Mearsheimer] provides a fascinating account of how great powersbehave and a powerful explanation of why they behave as they do."—Kenneth Waltz, Columbia University

"[Mearsheimer] is an excellent critic of rival perspectives,exposing their weaknesses with real forensic flair."—Adam Roberts, The Times Literary Supplement

Praise for Stephen M. Walt's

TAMING AMERICAN POWER

"[Walt] offers a rigorous critique of current U.S. strategyand, even better, a clearly articulated alternative."—David Ignatius, The Washington Post Book World

"This is a book to argue with and to admire."—Michael Ignatieff

"[A] brilliant contribution to the American foreign policy debate."—Anatol Lieven, The New York Times Book Review

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PREFACE

In all affairs it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the

things you have long taken for granted. —Bertrand Russell

In the fall of 2002, the Atlantic Monthly invited us to write a feature articleon the Israel lobby and its effects on U.S. foreign policy. We accepted thecommission with some reservations, because we knew this was a controversialsubject and that any article that scrutinized the lobby, U.S. support forIsrael, or Israeli policy itself was likely to provoke a harsh reaction.Nonetheless,we felt this was an issue that could no longer be ignored, especially inlight of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the looming war with Iraq. If

U.S. support for Israel was a significant source of anti-Americanism in theMiddle East and a source of tension with key strategic allies, and if pro-Israel groups and individuals were a major influence on U.S. foreign policyin this vital region, then it was important to raise the issue openly andencourage public discussion of the lobby's actions and impact.We worked on the article off and on over the next two years, in close collaborationwith the Atlantic?, editors, and we sent them a manuscript conformingto our prior agreements and incorporating virtually all of theirsuggestions in January 2005. A few weeks later, to our surprise, the editor informedus that the Atlantic had decided not to run the piece and that

he wasnot interested in our attempting to revise it.

We considered submitting the article to several other journals but concludedthat they would be unlikely to run the piece, either due to its contentor its length. We also considered the possibility of turning the article into abook, but responses to our initial inquiries were not sufficiently enthusiasticto convince us to commit additional time and effort to it. So we put the manuscriptaside and turned to other projects, although an abbreviated version

of some of this material was included in Stephen M. Walt's Taming AmericanPower, which was published by W. W. Norton in September 2005.

Then, in October 2005, a distinguished American academic contactedus and suggested that we consider publishing the article in the London Reviewof Books. Someone at the Atlantic had given him a copy of the rejectedessay, and he told us he thought the editor of the LRB, Mary-Kay Wilmers,would be interested. We sent her the manuscript and she quickly expressedher desire to publish it. After another round of updating and revision, thearticle—now titled "The Israel Lobby"—was published in the March 23,2006, issue. At the suggestion of one of the scholars who had read and commentedon an earlier draft, we simultaneously posted a fully documentedversion of the article on the Faculty Working Papers website of Harvard's

John F. Kennedy School of Government. We did this because the LRB's formatdoes not allow for extensive references or footnotes, and we wantedreaders to see that our argument rested on a wide array of credible sources.

The case advanced in the article was straightforward. After describingthe remarkable level of material and diplomatic support that the UnitedStates provides to Israel, we argued that this support could not be fully explainedon either strategic or moral grounds. Instead, it was due largely tothe political power of the Israel lobby, a loose coalition of individuals andgroups that seeks to influence American foreign policy in ways that will benefitIsrael. In addition to encouraging the United States to back Israel moreor less unconditionally, groups and individuals in the lobby played key rolesin shaping American policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the illfatedinvasion of Iraq, and the ongoing confrontations with Syria and Iran.We suggested that these policies were not in the U.S. national interest andwere in fact harmful to Israel's long-term interests as well.

The response to the essay was breathtaking. By July 2006, the KennedySchool's website had recorded more than 275,000 downloads of the workingpaper and we had received numerous requests to translate or reprint theLRB article. As expected, the essay initially generated a firestorm of criticismfrom prominent groups or individuals in the lobby, and we were denouncedas anti-Semites by the Anti-Defamation League and by op-edwriters in the Jerusalem Post, New York Sun, Wall Street Journal, and WashingtonPost. The New Republic devoted four separate articles to attackingour article, and a number of critics accused us—erroneously—of havingmade numerous historical or factual mistakes. A few critics even predictedthat the article (and its authors) would soon fade into what they thoughtwould be a richly deserved obscurity.

They were wrong. A wide variety of readers—both Jewish and gentile—came out in support of the article. They did not agree with every point wehad made, but almost all of them agreed that such an examination was longoverdue. Predictably, reactions outside the United States were generally favorable,and there were even some positive responses in Israel itself. Respectfulappraisals appeared in the New York Times, Financial Times, NewYork Review of Books, Chicago Tribune, New York Observer, National Interest,and Nation, and the controversy eventually received prominent coverage ina wide array of

news outlets, from Haaretz in Israel to National Public Radioin the United States.

The distinguished journal Foreign Policy organized a symposium on thearticle in its July/August 2006 issue, and the Washington Post Sunday Magazinepublished a thoughtful cover story in July exploring the issues we hadraised. Later that summer, a reviewer in Foreign Affairs described the articleas a "hard-headed analysis . . . that might set in motion a useful paradigmshift in United States' Middle East policy."

Over the course of 2006, it became increasingly clear that the conversationabout Israel and U.S. Middle East policy was indeed changing, and thatit had become somewhat easier to discuss the lobby's role in shaping U.S.policy. This was not entirely our doing, of course, as awareness of the lobby'sactivities and impact was also increased by Israel's disastrous war in Lebanonin the summer of 2006, the continued debacle in Iraq, the personal attackson Jimmy Carter following the publication of his book Palestine: Peace NotApartheid, the simmering war of words between the United States and Iran,and the conspicuous but failed efforts to silence or smear other prominentcritics of the lobby. A growing number of people seemed to realize that thissubject needed airing, and more were willing to speak out.

Equally important, thoughtful individuals were beginning to recognize thatthe American Israel Public Affairs Committee and other hard-line groupsin the lobby—including some vocal Christian Zionists—were not representativeof mainstream opinion in the American Jewish community or theUnited States more broadly. There was a growing debate about whether thepolicies advocated by these groups were in America's or in Israel's interest.As a result, some pro-Israel groups began to talk openly about the need toshift the balance of power in more moderate directions, and prominent publications

such as the Economist and the New York Times published commentariessuggesting that it was time for a new relationship between Israel andthe United States, for the benefit of both.

We were gratified by these developments, because we wrote the original

article in order to foster a more clear-eyed and candid discussion of this subject.That conversation was now under way, although it still tended to beshrill, confrontational, and overly personal. But should we write a book? Perhapswe had already said enough, and it was time to move on to other topics.After some reflection, and despite some lingering misgivings, we concludedthat writing a book would help advance the dialogue in several ways.

First, although the original article was long by the standards of mostmagazines, space limitations had forced us to omit a number of important issuesand to deal with certain topics more briefly than we would have liked.This unavoidable brevity may have contributed to some misunderstandingsof the original article, and writing a book would provide an opportunity topresent a more nuanced and detailed statement of our views.

Accordingly, this book contains a more complete definition of the lobby,an extended discussion of the role of Christian Zionism, and a fuller accountof the lobby's evolution over time. We also provide a more detailed accountof Israel's past conduct and current behavior, especially toward the Palestinians.We do this not from any animus toward Israel or its supporters in theUnited States, or because we are eager to highlight Israeli misconduct.Rather, we address this topic because it is central to some of the moral argumentscommonly used to justify an exceptional level of U.S. support forthe Jewish state. We focus on Israel's behavior, in other words, because theUnited States focuses an extraordinary degree of support on Israel. We alsoaddress the controversial issue of dual loyalty, which was not discussed inthe original article.

Second, writing this book enables us to respond to the central criticismsthat were lodged against our original article. We addressed some of them intwo subsequent letters to the London Review of Books and in the Foreign Policysymposium mentioned above, and we have also written a point-by-pointrebuttal of the various charges directed at the article (see "Setting theRecord Straight: A Response to Critics of

'The Israel Lobby,'" availableonline at www.israellobbybook.com). Although the vast majority of chargesleveled against the original article were unfounded—as were the variouspersonal attacks leveled at us—there were a number of thoughtful critiquesthat raised important issues of interpretation and emphasis. We havelearned from these criticisms even when not fully persuaded by them, andwe have tried to address them here.

Third, writing a book makes it possible to provide further empirical supportfor our core claims and to bring the analysis up to date. Not only has additionalevidence come to light regarding important events such as the Iraq

war, but some other events—most notably the second Lebanon war of July/August 2006—had not taken place when the original article appeared.America's response to that war proved to be a further illustration of thelobby's power, as well as its harmful influence on U.S. and Israeli interests.The lobby's activities could also be seen in the evolution of U.S. policytoward Iran and Syria, and in the harsh attacks on former President JimmyCarter, the historian Tony Judt, and several other prominent critics of Israel'streatment of the Palestinians.

Finally, this book presents an opportunity to discuss how the UnitedStates should advance its interests in the Middle East, and how Americans,and indeed the rest of the world, should think about the influence of thepro-Israel lobby. The stakes are high—for Americans and non-Americansalike—because the Middle East is a volatile and strategically vital regionand America's policies toward that region will inevitably have extensive

repercussions. As the war in Iraq demonstrates, the United States can dogreat damage to itself and to others if its policies are misguided. This factmakes it all the more important to identify what is driving U.S. policy and tofigure out what that policy ought to be. Our original article did not offermuch in the way of positive prescriptions, but the concluding chapter of thisbook outlines a different approach to U.S. Middle East policy and identifieshow the lobby's power might be mitigated or made more constructive.

Although we see encouraging signs of more open discussion on these vitalissues, the lobby still has a profound influence on U.S. Middle East policy.The problems that the United States and Israel face in this region havenot lessened since the original article appeared; indeed, they may well havegrown worse. Iraq is a fiasco, Israelis and Palestinians remain locked in conflict,Hamas and Fatah are battling for dominance within the Palestiniancommunity, and Hezbollah's role in Lebanon is deeply troubling. Iran is stillseeking to acquire full control of the nuclear fuel cycle, groups like al Qaedaremain active and dangerous, and the industrial world is still dependent onPersian Gulf oil. These are all vexing problems, and the United States willnot be able to address any or all of them effectively if Americans cannot havea civilized conversation about our interests in the region and the role of allthe factors that shape U.S. foreign policy, including the Israel lobby. To encouragethat continued conversation, we have written this book.

We acknowledge various personal debts at the end of the book, but wewould like to register one of them here. For more than twenty-five years, wehave been fortunate to enjoy the friendship and support of one of America'smost accomplished social scientists, Samuel P. Huntington. We cannot

imagine a better role model. Sam has always tackled big and important questions,and he has answered these questions in ways that the rest of the worldcould not ignore. Although each of us has disagreed with him on numerousoccasions over the years—and sometimes vehemently and publicly—henever held those disagreements against us and was never anything but graciousand supportive of our own work. He understands that scholarship isnot a popularity contest, and that spirited but civil debate is essential bothto scholarly progress and to a healthy democracy. We are grateful to Sam forhis friendship and for the example he has set throughout his career,

and weare pleased to dedicate this book to him.

John J . Mearsheimer Stephen M. WaltUniversity of Chicago Harvard University

THE ISRAEL LOBBY AND

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

America is about to enter a presidential election year. Although the outcomeis of course impossible to predict at this stage, certain features of thecampaign are easy to foresee. The candidates will inevitably differ on variousdomestic issues—health care, abortion, gay marriage, taxes, education,immigration—and spirited debates are certain to erupt on a host of foreignpolicy questions as well. What course of action should the United Statespursue in Iraq? What is the best response to the crisis in Darfur, Iran's nuclearambitions, Russia's hostility to NATO, and China's rising power? Howshould the United States address global warming, combat terrorism, andreverse the erosion of its international image? On these and many otherissues, we can confidently expect lively disagreements among the variouscandidates.

Yet on one subject, we can be equally confident that the candidates willspeak with one voice. In 2008, as in previous election years, serious candidatesfor the highest office in the land will go to considerable lengths to expresstheir deep personal commitment to one foreign country—Israel—as

well as their determination to maintain unyielding U.S. support for the Jewishstate. Each candidate will emphasize that he or she fully appreciates themultitude of threats facing Israel and make it clear that, if elected, theUnited States will remain firmly committed to defending Israel's interestsunder any and all circumstances. None of the candidates is likely to criticizeIsrael in any significant way or suggest that the United States ought to pursuea more evenhanded policy in the region. Any who do will probably fall bythe wayside.

This observation is hardly a bold prediction, because presidential aspi

rants were already proclaiming their support for Israel in early 2007. Theprocess began in January, when four potential candidates spoke to Israel'sannual Herzliya Conference on security issues. As Joshua Mitnick reportedin Jewish Week, they were "seemingly competing to see who can be most stridentin defense of the Jewish State." Appearing via satellite link, John Edwards,the Democratic party's 2004 vice presidential candidate, told hisIsraeli listeners that "your future is our future" and said that the bond betweenthe United States and Israel "will never be broken." Former Massachusettsgovernor Mitt Romney spoke of being "in a country I love withpeople I love" and, aware of Israel's deep concern about a possible nuclearIran, proclaimed that "it is time for the world to speak three truths: (1) Iranmust be stopped; (2) Iran can be stopped; (3) Iran will be stopped!" SenatorJohn McCain (R-AZ) declared that "when it comes to the defense of Israel,we simply cannot compromise," while former House Speaker Newt Gingrich(R-GA) told the audience that "Israel is facing the greatest danger for[sic] its survival since the 1967 victory."1

Shortly thereafter, in early February, Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY)spoke in New York before the local chapter of the powerful American IsraelPublic Affairs Committee (AIPAC), where she said that in this "moment ofgreat difficulty for Israel and great peril for Israel . . . what is vital is thatwestand by our friend and our ally and we stand by our own values. Israel is abeacon of what's right in a neighborhood overshadowed by the wrongs ofradicalism, extremism, despotism and terrorism."2 One of her rivals for theDemocratic nomination, Senator Barack Obama (D-IL), spoke a monthlater before an AIPAC audience in Chicago. Obama, who has expressedsome sympathy for the Palestinians' plight in the past and made a brief referenceto Palestinian "suffering" at a campaign appearance in March 2007,was unequivocal in his praise for Israel and made it manifestly clear that

hewould do nothing to change the U.S.-Israeli relationship.3 Other presidentialhopefuls, including Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS) and New Mexicogovernor Bill Richardson, have expressed pro-Israel sentiments with equalor greater ardor.4

What explains this behavior? Why is there so little disagreement amongthese presidential hopefuls regarding Israel, when there are profound disagreementsamong them on almost every other important issue facing theUnited States and when it is apparent that America's Middle East policy hasgone badly awry? Why does Israel get a free pass from presidential candidates,when its own citizens are often deeply critical of its present policiesand when these same presidential candidates are all too willing to criticize

many of the things that other countries do? Why does Israel, and no othercountry in the world, receive such consistent deference from America'sleading politicians?

Some might say that it is because Israel is a vital strategic asset for theUnited States. Indeed, it is said to be an indispensable partner in the "waron terror." Others will answer that there is a powerful moral case for providingIsrael with unqualified support, because it is the only country in the regionthat "shares our values." But neither of these arguments stands up tofair-minded scrutiny. Washington's close relationship with Jerusalem makes

it harder, not easier, to defeat the terrorists who are now targeting theUnited States, and it simultaneously undermines America's standing withimportant allies around the world. Now that the Cold War is over, Israel hasbecome a strategic liability for the United States. Yet no aspiring politician isgoing to say so in public, or even raise the possibility.

There is also no compelling moral rationale for America's uncritical anduncompromising relationship with Israel. There is a strong moral case for Israel'sexistence and there are good reasons for the United States to be committedto helping Israel if its survival is in jeopardy. But given Israel's brutaltreatment of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, moral considerationsmight suggest that the United States pursue a more evenhandedpolicy toward the two sides, and maybe even lean toward the Palestinians.Yet we are unlikely to hear that sentiment expressed by anyone who wants tobe president, or anyone who would like to occupy a position in Congress.

The real reason why American politicians are so deferential is the politicalpower of the Israel lobby. The lobby is a loose coalition of individuals andorganizations that actively works to move U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israeldirection. As we will describe in detail, it is not a single, unified movementwith a central leadership, and it is certainly not a cabal or conspiracy that"controls" U.S. foreign policy. It is simply a powerful interest group, made upof both Jews and gentiles, whose acknowledged purpose is to press Israel'scase within the United States and influence American foreign policy in waysthat its members believe will benefit the Jewish state. The various groupsthat make up the lobby do not agree on every issue, although they share thedesire to promote a special relationship between the United States and Israel.Like the efforts of other ethnic lobbies and interest groups, the activitiesof the Israel lobby's various elements are legitimate forms of democraticpolitical participation, and they are for the most part consistent with America'slong tradition of interest group activity.

Because the Israel lobby has gradually become one of the most powerful

interest groups in the United States, candidates for high office pay close attentionto its wishes. The individuals and groups in the United States thatmake up the lobby care deeply about Israel, and they do not want Americanpoliticians to criticize it, even when criticism might be warranted and mighteven be in Israel's own interest. Instead, these groups want U.S. leaders totreat Israel as if it were the fifty-first state.

Democrats and Republicans alikefear the lobby's clout. They all know that any politician who challenges itspolicies stands little chance of becoming president.

THE LOBBY AND U.S. MIDDLE EAST POLICY

The lobby's political power is important not because it affects what presidentialcandidates say during a campaign, but because it has a significantinfluence on American foreign policy, especially in the Middle East. America'sactions in that volatile region have enormous consequences for peopleall around the world, especially the people who live there. Just consider howthe Bush administration's misbegotten war in Iraq has affected the longsufferingpeople of that shattered country: tens of thousands dead, hundredsof thousands forced to flee their homes, and a vicious sectarian wartaking place with no end in sight. The war has also been a strategic disasterfor the United States and has alarmed and endangered U.S. allies both insideand outside the region. One could hardly imagine a more vivid or tragicdemonstration of the impact the United States can have—for good or ill—when it unleashes the power at its disposal.

The United States has been involved in the Middle East since the earlydays of the Republic, with much of the activity centered on educational programsor missionary work. For some, a biblically inspired fascination withthe Holy Land and the role of Judaism in its history led to support for theidea of restoring the Jewish people to a homeland there, a view that was embracedby certain religious leaders and, in a general way, by a few U.S. politicians.But it is a mistake to see this history of modest and for the most partprivate engagement as the taproot of America's role in the region sinceWorld War II, and especially its extraordinary relationship with Israel today.5

Between the routing of the Barbary pirates two hundred years ago and WorldWar II, the United States played no significant security role anywhere in theregion and U.S. leaders did not aspire to one.6 Woodrow Wilson did endorsethe 1917 Balfour Declaration (which expressed Britain's support for the creationof a Jewish homeland in Palestine), but Wilson did virtually nothing to

advance this goal. Indeed, the most significant U.S. involvement during thisperiod—a fact-finding mission dispatched to the region in 1919 by the ParisPeace Conference under the leadership of Americans Henry Churchill Kingand Charles Crane—concluded that the local population opposed continuedZionist inroads and recommended against the establishment of an independentJewish homeland. Yet as the historian Margaret Macmillan notes,"Nobody paid the slightest attention." The possibility of a U.S. mandate overportions of the Middle East was briefly considered but never pursued, andBritain and France ended up dividing the relevant portions of the OttomanEmpire between themselves.7

The United States has played an important and steadily increasing rolein Middle East security issues since World War II, driven initially by oil,then by anticommunism and, over time, by its growing relationship withIsrael. America's first significant involvement in the security politics of theregion was a nascent partnership with Saudi Arabia in the mid-1940s(intended by both parties as a check on British ambitions in the region), andits first formal alliance commitments were Turkey's inclusion in NATO in1952 and the anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact in 1954.8 After backing Israel'sfounding in 1948, U.S. leaders tried to strike a balanced position betweenIsrael and the Arabs and carefully avoided making any formal commitmentto the Jewish state for fear of jeopardizing more important strategic interests.This situation changed gradually over the ensuing decades, in responseto events like the Six-Day War, Soviet arms sales to various Arab states, andthe growing influence of pro-Israel groups in the United States. Given thisdramatic transformation in America's role in the region, it makes little senseto try to explain current U.S. policy—and especially the lavish support thatis now given to Israel—by referring to the religious beliefs of a bygone era orthe radically different forms of past American engagement. There was nothinginevitable or predetermined about the current special relationship betweenthe United States and Israel.

Since the Six-Day War of 1967, a salient feature—and arguably the centralfocus—of America's Middle East policy has been its relationship withIsrael. For the past four decades, in fact, the United States has provided Israelwith a level of material and diplomatic support that dwarfs what it providesto other countries. That aid is largely unconditional: no matter whatIsrael does, the level of support remains for the most part unchanged. Inparticular, the United States consistently favors Israel over the Palestiniansand rarely puts pressure on the Jewish state to stop building settlements androads in the West Bank. Although Presidents Bill Clinton and George W.

Bush openly favored the creation of a viable Palestinian state, neither waswilling to use American leverage to make that outcome a reality.

The United States has also undertaken policies in the broader MiddleEast that reflected Israels preferences. Since the early 1990s, for example,American policy toward Iran has been heavily influenced by the wishes ofsuccessive Israeli governments. Tehran has made several attempts in recentyears to improve relations with Washington and settle outstanding differences,but Israel and its American supporters have been able to stymie anydétente between Iran and the United States, and to keep the two countriesfar apart. Another example is the Bush administration's behavior during Israel'swar against Lebanon in the summer of 2006. Almost every country inthe world harshly criticized Israel's bombing campaign—a campaign thatkilled more than one thousand Lebanese, most of them civilians—but theUnited States did not. Instead, it helped Israel prosecute the war, withprominent members of both political parties openly defending Israel's behavior.This unequivocal support for Israel undermined the pro-American

government in Beirut, strengthened Hezbollah, and drove Iran, Syria, andHezbollah closer together, results that were hardly good for either Washingtonor Jerusalem.

Many policies pursued on Israel's behalf now jeopardize U.S. nationalsecurity. The combination of unstinting U.S. support for Israel and Israel'sprolonged occupation of Palestinian territory has fueled anti-Americanismthroughout the Arab and Islamic world, thereby increasing the threat frominternational terrorism and making it harder for Washington to deal withother problems, such as shutting down Iran's nuclear program. Because theUnited States is now so unpopular within the broader region, Arab leaderswho might otherwise share U.S. goals are reluctant to help us openly, a predicamentthat cripples U.S. efforts to deal with a host of regional challenges.

This situation, which has no equal in American history, is due primarilyto the activities of the Israel lobby. While other special interest groups—including ethnic lobbies representing Cuban Americans, Irish Americans,Armenian Americans, and Indian Americans—have managed to skew U.S.foreign policy in directions that they favored, no ethnic lobby has divertedthat policy as far from what the American national interest would otherwisesuggest. The Israel lobby has successfully convinced many Americans thatAmerican and Israeli interests are essentially identical. In fact, they are not.

Although this book focuses primarily on the lobby's influence on U.S.foreign policy and its negative effect on American interests, the lobby's im

pact has been unintentionally harmful to Israel as well. Take Israel's settlements,which even a writer as sympathetic to Israel as Leon Wieseltier recentlycalled a "moral and strategic blunder of historic proportions."9 Israel'ssituation would be better today if the United States had long ago used its financialand diplomatic leverage to convince Israel to stop building settlementsin the West Bank and Gaza, and instead helped Israel create a viablePalestinian state on those lands. Washington did not do so, however, largelybecause it would have been politically costly for any president to attempt it.As noted above, Israel would have been much better off if the United Stateshad told it that its military strategy for fighting the 2006 Lebanon war wasdoomed to fail, rather than reflexively endorsing and facilitating it. By makingit difficult to impossible for the U.S. government to criticize Israel's conductand press it to change some of

its counterproductive policies, the lobbymay even be jeopardizing the long-term prospects of the Jewish state.

THE LOBBY'S MODUS OPERANDI

It is difficult to talk about the lobby's influence on American foreign policy, atleast in the mainstream media in the United States, without being accused ofanti-Semitism or labeled a self-hating Jew. It is just as difficult to criticizeIsraelipolicies or question U.S. support for Israel in polite company. America'sgenerous and unconditional support for Israel is rarely questioned, becausegroups in the lobby use their power to make sure that public discourseechoes its strategic and moral arguments for the special relationship.

The response to former President Jimmy Carter's Palestine: Peace NotApartheid perfectly illustrates this phenomenon. Carter's book is a personalplea for renewed American engagement in the peace process, based largelyon his considerable experience with these issues over the past three decades.Reasonable people may challenge his evidence or disagree with hisconclusions, but his ultimate goal is peace between these two peoples, andCarter unambiguously defends Israel's right to live in peace and security. Yetbecause he suggests that Israel's policies in the Occupied Territories resembleSouth Africa's apartheid regime and said publicly that pro-Israel groupsmake it hard for U.S. leaders to pressure Israel to make peace, a number ofthese same groups launched a vicious smear campaign against him. Notonly was Carter publicly accused of being an anti-Semite and a "Jew-hater,"some critics even charged him with being sympathetic to Nazis.1 0 Since the

lobby seeks to keep the present relationship intact, and because in fact itsstrategic and moral arguments are so weak, it has little choice but to try tostifle or marginalize serious discussion.

Yet despite the lobby's efforts, a considerable number of Americans—almost40 percent—recognize that U.S. support for Israel is one of the maincauses of anti-Americanism around the world. Among elites, the number issubstantially higher.1 1 Furthermore, a surprising number of Americans understandthat the lobby has a significant, not always positive influence on

U.S. foreign policy. In a national poll taken in October 2006, 39 percent ofthe respondents said that they believe that the "work of the Israeli lobby onCongress and the Bush administration has been a key factor for going to warin Iraq and now confronting Iran."12 In a 2006 survey of international relationsscholars in the United States, 66 percent of the respondents said thatthey agreed with the statement "the Israel lobby has too much influenceover U.S. foreign policy."13 While the American people are generally sympatheticto Israel, many of them are critical of particular Israeli policies andwould be willing to withhold American aid if Israel's actions are seen to becontrary to U.S. interests.Of course, the American public would be even more aware of the lobby'sinfluence and more tough-minded with regard to Israel and its special relationshipwith the United States if there were a more open discussion ofthese matters. Still, one might wonder why, given the public's views aboutthe lobby and Israel, politicians and policy makers are so unwilling to criticizeIsrael and to make aid to Israel conditional on whether its actions benefitthe United States. The American people are certainly not demandingthat their politicians support Israel down the line. In essence, there is a distinctgulf between how the broader public thinks about Israel and its relationshipwith the United States and how governing elites in Washingtonconduct American policy.

The main reason for this gap is the lobby's formidable reputation inside theBeltway. Not only does it exert significant influence over the policy process inDemocratic and Republican administrations alike, but it is even more powerfulon Capitol Hill.1 4 The journalist Michael Massing reports that a congressionalstaffer sympathetic to Israel told him, "We can count on well over half theHouse—250 to 300 members—to do reflexively whatever AIPAC wants."Similarly, Steven Rosen, the former AIPAC official who has been indictedfor allegedly passing classified government documents to Israel, illustratedAI PAC s power for the New Yorkers Jeffrey Goldberg by putting a napkin infront of

him and saying, "In twenty-four hours, we could have the signatures of

seventy senators on this napkin."15 These are not idle boasts. As will becomeclear, when issues relating to Israel come to the fore, Congress almost alwaysvotes to endorse the lobby's positions, and usually in overwhelming numbers.

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO TALK ABOUT THE ISRAEL LOBBY?

Because the United States is a pluralist democracy where freedom ofspeech and association are guaranteed, it was inevitable that interest groupswould come to dominate the political process. For a nation of immigrants, itwas equally inevitable that some of these interest groups would form alongethnic lines and that they would try to influence U.S. foreign policy in variousways.16 Cuban Americans have lobbied to maintain the embargo on Castro'sregime, Armenian Americans have pushed Washington to acknowledgethe 1915 genocide and, more recently, to limit U.S. relations with Azerbaijan,and Indian Americans have rallied to support the recent security treatyand nuclear cooperation agreements. Such activities have been a centralfeature of American political life since the founding of the country, andpointing them out is rarely controversial.17

Yet it is clearly more difficult for Americans to talk openly about the Israellobby. Part of the reason is the lobby itself, which is both eager to advertiseits clout and quick to challenge anyone who suggests that its influenceis too great or might be detrimental to U.S. interests. There are, however,

other reasons why it is harder to have a candid discussion about the impactof the Israel lobby.

To begin with, questioning the practices and ramifications of the Israellobby may appear to some to be tantamount to questioning the legitimacy ofIsrael itself. Because some states still refuse to recognize Israel and somecritics of Israel and the lobby do question its legitimacy, many of its supportersmay see even well-intentioned criticism as an implicit challenge to Israel'sexistence. Given the strong feelings that many people have for Israel,and especially its important role as a safe haven for Jewish refugees from theHolocaust and as a central focus of contemporary Jewish identity, there isbound to be a hostile and defensive reaction when people think its legitimacyor its existence is under attack.

But in fact, an examination of Israel's policies and the efforts of its Americansupporters does not imply an anti-Israel bias, just as an examination ofthe political activities of the American Association of Retired Persons(AARP) does not imply bias against older citizens. We are not challenging

Israels right to exist or questioning the legitimacy of the Jewish state. Thereare those who maintain that Israel should never have been created, or whowant to see Israel transformed from a Jewish state into a binational democracy.We do not. On the contrary, we believe the history of the Jewish peopleand the norm of national self-determination provide ample justificationfor a Jewish state. We think the United States should stand willing to cometo Israel's assistance if its survival were in jeopardy. And though our primaryfocus is on the Israel lobby's negative impact on U.S. foreign policy, we arealso convinced that its influence has become harmful to Israel as well. Inour view, both effects are regrettable.

In addition, the claim that an interest group whose ranks are mostly Jewishhas a powerful, not to mention negative, influence on U.S. foreign policyis sure to make some Americans deeply uncomfortable—and possibly fearfuland angry—because it sounds like a charge lifted from the notorious Protocolsof the Elders ofZion, that well-known anti-Semitic forgery that purported to revealan all-powerful Jewish cabal exercising secret control over the world.

Any discussion of Jewish political power takes place in the shadow oftwo thousand years of history, especially the centuries of very real anti-Semitism in Europe. Christians massacred thousands of Jews during theCrusades, expelled them en masse from Britain,

France, Spain, Portugal,and other places between 1290 and 1497, and confined them to ghettos inother parts of Europe. Jews were violently oppressed during the Spanish Inquisition,murderous pogroms took place in Eastern Europe and Russia onnumerous occasions, and other forms of anti-Semitic bigotry were widespreaduntil recently. This shameful record culminated in the Nazi Holocaust,which killed nearly six million Jews. Jews were also oppressed in partsof the Arab world, though much less severely.18

Given this long history of persecution, American Jews are understandablysensitive to any argument that sounds like someone is blaming them forpolicies gone awry. This sensitivity is compounded by the memory of bizarreconspiracy theories of the sort laid out in the Protocols. Dire warnings ofsecretive"Jewish influence" remain a staple of neo-Nazis and other extremists,such as the hate-mongering former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke, whichreinforces Jewish concerns even more.

A key element of such anti-Semitic accusations is the claim that Jews exerciseillegitimate influence by "controlling" banks, the media, and other keyinstitutions. Thus, if someone says that press coverage in the United Statestends to favor Israel over its opponents, this may sound to some like the oldcanard that "Jews control the media." Similarly, if someone points out that

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American Jews have a rich tradition of giving money to both philanthropic and

political causes, it sounds like they are suggesting that "Jewish money" is buyingpolitical influence in an underhanded or conspiratorial way. Of course,anyone who gives money to a political campaign does so in order to advancesome political cause, and virtually all interest groups hope to mold publicopinion and are interested in getting favorable media coverage. Evaluating therole of any interest group's campaign contributions, lobbying efforts, and otherpolitical activities ought to be a fairly uncontroversial exercise, but given pastanti-Semitism, one can understand why it is easier to talk about these matterswhen discussing the impact of the pharmaceutical lobby, labor unions, armsmanufacturers, Indian-American groups, etc., rather than the Israel lobby.

Making this discussion of pro-Israel groups and individuals in the UnitedStates even more difficult is the age-old charge of "dual loyalty." Accordingto this old canard, Jews in the diaspora were perpetual aliens who couldnever assimilate and be good patriots, because they were more loyal to eachother than to the country in which they lived. The fear today is that Jewswho support Israel will be seen as disloyal Americans. As Hyman Bookbinder,the former Washington representative of the American Jewish Committee,once commented, "Jews react viscerally to the suggestion that thereis something unpatriotic" about their support for Israel.1 9

Let us be clear: we categorically reject all of these anti-Semitic claims.

In our view, it is perfectly legitimate for any American to have a significantattachment to a foreign country. Indeed, Americans are permitted tohold dual citizenship and to serve in foreign armies, unless, of course, theother country is at war with the United States. As noted above, there are numerousexamples of ethnic groups in America working hard to persuade the

U.S. government, as well as their fellow citizens, to support the foreigncountry for which they feel a powerful bond. Foreign governments are usuallyaware of the activities of sympathetic ethnically based interest groups,and they have naturally sought to use them to influence the U.S. governmentand advance their own foreign policy goals. Jewish Americans are nodifferent from their fellow citizens in this regard.2 0The Israel lobby is not a cabal or conspiracy or anything of the sort. It isengaged in good old-fashioned interest group politics, which is as Americanas apple pie. Pro-Israel groups in the United States are engaged in the sameenterprise as other interest

groups like the National Rifle Association (NRA)and the AARP, or professional associations like the American Petroleum Institute,all of which also work hard to influence congressional legislation andpresidential priorities, and which, for the most part, operate in the open.

With a few exceptions, to be discussed in subsequent chapters, the lobby'sactions are thoroughly American and legitimate.

We do not believe the lobby is all-powerful, or that it controls importantinstitutions in the United States. As we will discuss in several subsequentchapters, there are a number of cases where the lobby did not get its way.Nevertheless,there is an abundance of evidence that the lobby wields impressiveinfluence. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, one of the most importantpro-Israel groups, used to brag about its own power on its website, notonly by listing its impressive achievements but also by displaying quotationsfrom prominent politicians that attested to its ability to influence events inways that benefit Israel. For example, its website used to include a statementfrom former House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt telling an AIPAC gathering,"Without your constant support. . . and all your fighting on a daily basisto strengthen [the U.S.-Israeli relationship], it would not be."2 1 Even theoutspokenHarvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, who is often quick to brandIsrael's critics as anti-Semites, wrote in a memoir that "my generation ofJews . . . became part of what is perhaps the most effective lobbying andfundraisingeffort in the history of democracy. We did a truly great job, as far as weallowed ourselves, and were allowed, to go."2 2

J.J . Goldberg, the editor of the Jewish weekly newspaper the Forward and

the author of Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment, nicelycaptures the difficulty of talking about the lobby: "It seems as though we'reforced to choose between Jews holding vast and pernicious control or Jewishinfluence being non-existent." In fact, he notes, "somewhere in the middle isa reality that none wants to discuss, which is that there is an entity called theJewish community made up of a group of organizations and public figuresthat's part of the political rough-and-tumble. There's nothing wrong withplaying the game like everybody else."2 3 We agree completely. But we think itis fair and indeed necessary to examine the consequences that this "roughand-tumble" interest group politics can have on America and the world.HOW WE MAKE OUR CASE

To make our case, we have to accomplish three tasks. Specifically, we haveto convince readers that the United States provides Israel with extraordinarymaterial aid and diplomatic support, the lobby is the principal reason forthat support, and this uncritical and unconditional relationship is not in theAmerican national interest. To do so, we proceed as follows.

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Chapter 1 ("The Great Benefactor") addresses the first issue directly, bydescribing the economic and military aid that the United States gives to Israel,as well as the diplomatic backing that Washington has provided inpeace and in war. Subsequent chapters also discuss the different elementsof U.S. Middle East policy that have been designed in whole or in part tobenefit Israel vis-à-vis its various rivals.

Chapters 2 and 3 assess the main arguments that are usually invoked tojustify or explain the exceptional amount of support that Israel receives fromthe United States. This critical assessment is necessary for methodologicalreasons: in order to properly assess the impact of the Israel lobby, we have toexamine other possible explanations that might account for the "specialrelationship"that now exists between the two countries.

In Chapter 2 ("Israel: Strategic Asset or Liability?"), we examine the familiarargument that Israel deserves lavish support because it is a valuablestrategic asset. We show that although Israel may have been an asset duringthe Cold War, it is now increasingly a strategic liability. Backing Israel sostrongly helps fuel America's terrorism problem and makes it harder for theUnited States to address the other problems it faces in the Middle East.Unconditionalsupport for Israel

also complicates U.S. relations with a numberof other countries around the world, thereby imposing additional costs on theUnited States. Yet even though the costs of backing Israel have risen whilethe benefits have declined, American support continues to increase. This situationsuggests that something other than strategic imperatives is at work.

Chapter 3 ("A Dwindling Moral Case") examines the different moral rationalesthat Israelis and their American supporters often use to explain U.S.support for the Jewish state. In particular, we consider the claim that theUnited States backs Israel because of shared "democratic values," becauseIsrael is a weak and vulnerable David facing a powerful Arab Goliath, becauseits past and present conduct is more ethical than its adversaries' behavior,or because it has always sought peace while its neighbors always chosewar. This assessment is necessary not because we have any animus toward Israelor because we think its conduct is worse than that of other states, but becausethese essentially moral claims are so frequently used to explain why theUnited States should give Israel exceptional levels of aid. We conclude thatwhile there is a strong moral case for Israel's existence, the moral case for givingit such generous and largely unconditional support is not compelling.Once again, this juxtaposition of a dwindling moral case and ever-increasing

U.S. backing suggests that something else must be at work.Having established that neither strategic interests nor moral rationales

can fully explain U.S. support for Israel, we turn our attention to that "somethingelse." Chapter 4 ("What Is the 'Israel Lobby'?") identifies the lobby's

different components and describes how this loose coalition has evolved.We stress that it is not a single unified movement, that its different elementssometimes disagree on certain issues, and that it includes both Jews andnon-Jews, including the so-called Christian Zionists. We also show howsome of the most important organizations in the lobby have drifted rightwardover time and are increasingly unrepresentative of the larger populationson whose behalf they often claim to speak.

This chapter also considers whether Arab-American groups, the so-calledoil lobby, or wealthy Arab oil producers are either a significant counterweightto the Israel lobby or even the real driving forces behind U.S. Middle Eastpolicy. Many people seem to believe, for example, that the invasion of Iraqwas mostly about oil and that corporate oil interests were the primary moversbehind the U.S. decision to attack that country. This is not the case: althoughaccess to oil is obviously an important U.S. interest, there are good reasonswhy Arab Americans, oil companies, and the Saudi royal family wield far lessinfluence on U.S. foreign policy than the Israel lobby does.

In Chapter 5 ("Guiding the Policy Process") and Chapter 6 ("DominatingPublic Discourse"), we describe the different strategies that groups inthe lobby use in order to advance Israel's interests in the United States. Inaddition to direct lobbying on Capitol Hill, the lobby rewards or punishespoliticians largely through an ability to guide the flow of campaign contributions.Organizations in the lobby also put pressure on the executive branchthrough a number of mechanisms, including working through governmentofficials who are sympathetic to their views. Equally important, the lobbyhas gone to considerable lengths to shape public discourse about Israel byputting pressure on the media and academia and by establishing a tangiblepresence in influential foreign policy think tanks. Efforts to shape publicperceptions often include charging critics of Israel with anti-Semitism, atactic designed to discredit and marginalize anyone who challenges the currentrelationship.

These tasks accomplished, Part II traces the lobby's role in shaping recentU.S. Middle East policy. Our argument, it should be emphasized, is notthat the lobby is the only factor that influences U.S. decision making inthese issues. It is not omnipotent, so it does not get its way on every issue.But it is very effective in shaping U.S. policy toward Israel and the surroundingregion in ways that are intended to benefit Israel—and believed also tobenefit the United States. Unfortunately, the policies it has successfully en

couraged have actually done considerable harm to U.S. interests and havebeen harmful to Israel as well.

Following a brief introduction to set the stage, Chapter 7 ("The Lobby Versusthe Palestinians") shows how the United States has consistently backedIsrael's efforts to quell or limit the Palestinians' national aspirations. Evenwhen American presidents put pressure on Israel to make concessions or tryto distance the United States from Israel's policies—as President George W.Bush has attempted to do on several occasions since September 11—thelobby intervenes and brings them back into line. The result has been a worseningimage for the United States, continued suffering on both sides of theIsraeli-Palestinian divide, and a growing radicalization among the Palestinians.None of these trends is in America's or Israel's interest.

In Chapter 8 ("Iraq and Dreams of Transforming the Middle East"), weshow how the lobby—and especially the neoconservatives within it—wasthe principal driving force behind the Bush administration's decision toinvade Iraq in 2003. We emphasize that the lobby did not cause the war byitself. The September 11 attacks had a profound impact on the Bush administration'sforeign policy and the decision to topple Saddam Hussein. Butabsent the lobby's influence, there almost certainly would not have been awar. The lobby was a necessary but not sufficient condition for a war that isa strategic disaster for the United States and a boon for Iran, Israel's mostserious regional adversary.

Chapter 9 ("Taking Aim at Syria") describes the evolution of America's

difficult relationship with the Assad regime in Syria. We document how thelobby has pushed Washington to adopt confrontational policies toward Syria(including occasional threats of regime change) when doing so was what theIsraeli government wanted. The United States and Syria would not be alliesif key groups in the lobby were less influential, but the United States wouldhave taken a much less confrontational approach and might even be cooperatingwith Syria in a number of limited but useful ways. Indeed, absentthe lobby, there might already be a peace treaty between Israel and Syria,and Damascus might not be backing Hezbollah in Lebanon, which would begood for both Washington and Jerusalem.

In Chapter 10 ("Iran in the Crosshairs"), we trace the lobby's role in U.S.policy toward Iran. Washington and Tehran have had difficult relations sincethe 1979 revolution that overthrew the shah, and Israel has come to see Iranas its most serious adversary, in light of its nuclear ambitions and its supportfor groups like Hezbollah. Accordingly, Israel and the lobby have repeatedlypushed the United States to go after Iran and have acted to derail several

earlier opportunities for détente. The result, unfortunately, is that Iran's nuclearambitions have increased and more extreme elements (such as currentPresident Mahmoud Ahmadinejad) have come to power, making a difficultsituation worse.

Lebanon is the subject of Chapter 11 ("The Lobby and the SecondLebanon War"), and the pattern is much the same. We argue that Israels responseto Hezbollah's unjustified provocation in the summer of 2006 wasboth strategically foolish and morally wrong, yet the lobby's influence madeit hard for U.S. officials to do anything except strongly back Israel. This caseoffers yet another classic illustration of the lobby's regrettable influence onAmerican and Israeli interests: by making it hard for U.S. policy makers tostep back and give their Israeli counterparts honest and critical advice, thelobby facilitated a policy that further tarnished America's image, weakenedthe democratically elected regime in Beirut, and strengthened Hezbollah.

The final chapter ("What Is to Be Done?") explores how this unfortunatesituation might be improved. We begin by identifying America's core MiddleEast interests and then sketch the essential principles of a strategy—which weterm offshore balancing—that could defend these interests more effectively.We do not call for abandoning

the U.S. commitment to Israel—indeed, we explicitlyendorse coming to Israel's aid if its survival were ever in jeopardy. Butwe argue that it is time to treat Israel like a normal country and to make U.S.aid conditional on an end to the occupation and on Israel's willingness to conformits policies to American interests. Accomplishing this shift requires addressingthe political power of the lobby and its current policy agenda, and weoffer several suggestions for how the power of the lobby might be modified tomake its influence more beneficial for the United States and Israel alike.

THOSE WE LEARNED FROM

No author is an island, and we owe a considerable debt to other scholars andwriters who examined these subjects before we did. To begin with, there isthe extensive academic literature on interest groups that helped us understandhow small but focused movements can exert influence far greater thantheir absolute numbers within the population might suggest.2 4 There is alsoa robust literature on the impact of ethnic groups on U.S. foreign policy,which confirms that the Israel lobby is not unique in its basic activities, onlyin its unusual level of influence.2 5

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A second body of literature addresses the lobby itself. A number of journalists,scholars, and former politicians have written about the lobby. Writtenfrom both critical and sympathetic perspectives, these works contain aconsiderable amount of useful information on the ways that the lobby hasworked to influence U.S. foreign policy We hope our account will extendthe trail that these earlier writers blazed.2 6

We have also learned a great deal from other studies, too numerous tolist in toto, that deal with particular aspects of U.S. Middle East policy,U.S.-Israeli relations, or specific policy issues. Although some of these works—such as Steven Spiegel's The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making AmericasMiddle East Policy from Truman to Reagan and Warren Bass's Support AnyFriend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U.S.-Israel Alliance—

tend to downplay the lobby's influence, serious works of scholarship such asthese nonetheless contain considerable evidence of the lobby's impact andespecially its growing clout.2 7

There is a final body of literature that has played an important role in helpingus to think about Israel, the lobby, and America's relationship with the Jewishstate. We refer to the so-called new history that has come out of Israel overthe past twenty years. Using extensive archival research, Israeli scholars likeShlomo Ben-Ami, Simha Flapan, Baruch Kimmerling, Benny Morris, IlanPappe, Tom Segev, Avi Shlaim, and Zeev Sternhell have effectively overturnedthe conventional wisdom on Israel's founding and on its subsequent policiestoward both the surrounding states and the Palestinians.28 Scholars from othercountries have also contributed to setting the historical record straight.29Togetherthese individuals have undermined the original, highly romanticizedversion of the founding, in which the Jews are usually portrayed as the whitehats and the Arabs as the black hats. Moreover, these works make clear thatafter Israel gained its independence, it behaved much more aggressivelytoward the Palestinians and other Arabs than is commonly recognized.

There are various disputes among these historians, of course, and we donot agree with every point they make. Nevertheless, the story they collectivelytell is not just a matter of academic interest. In fact, it has profoundimplications for how one thinks about the moral rationale for supporting Israelover the Palestinians. It also helps one understand why so many peoplein the Arab and Islamic world are deeply angry at the United States for supportingIsrael so generously and unconditionally.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

A brief word about sources is in order before we proceed. Much of thisstudy—especially Part II—deals with recent history, or with events whoseultimate outcome remains uncertain. Because official documents regardingcontemporary events are normally unavailable to

scholars, we have beenforced to rely on other sources: newspapers, magazines, scholarly articles,books, reports from human rights organizations, radio and television transcripts,and personal interviews that we conducted. In a few instances, wehad to work with an admittedly spotty record of events. Although we think itis unlikely, some parts of our story may look different once official recordsbecome available.

In order to ensure that our various arguments are correct, we backed upvirtually every significant point with multiple sources, which accounts forthe extensive notes provided at the end of this book. We also relied heavilyon Israeli sources like Haaretz and the Jerusalem Post, as well as the writingsof Israeli scholars. Another indispensable source of information was AmericanJewish publications like the Forward and Jewish Week. Not only are theseIsraeli and Jewish-American sources filled with important information thatis not found in the mainstream media in the United States, these newspaperswere by and large not likely to be sympathetic to many of our argumentsabout the lobby. Our reliance on them should help make our conclusionseven more reliable.

CONCLUSION

Our analysis begins by describing the material and diplomatic support thatthe United States provides to Israel. The fact that America gives considerablesupport to the Jewish state is hardly headline news, but readers may besurprised to learn just how extensive and varied this largesse actually is.Documenting that support is the subject of the next chapter.

PART I

THE UNITED STATES,ISRAEL, AND THE LOBBY

1

THE GREAT BENEFACTOR

"We are more than thankful to you." Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabinwas uncharacteristically effusive when he appeared before a joint session ofCongress on July 26, 1994. Extending his remarks to the "wonderful peopleof America," Rabin emphasized that "no words can express our gratitude . . .for your generous support, understanding, and cooperation, which are beyondcompare in modern history." Two years later, following Rabin's tragicassassination, one of his successors, Benjamin Netanyahu, stood in thesame spot and offered similar words of appreciation: "The United States hasgiven Israel—how can I tell it to this body? The United States has given Israel,apart from political and military support, munificent and magnificentassistance in the economic sphere. With America's help, Israel has grown tobe a powerful, modern state." He told his audience, "I know that I speak forevery Israeli and every Jew throughout the world when I say to you today,Thank you, people of America.'"1

These statements—and others like them—are not merely the graciousrhetoric that one typically hears from visiting foreign dignitaries. Rabin's andNetanyahu's words are an accurate description of the remarkable backingthat the United States has long provided to the Jewish state. American taxpayers'money has subsidized Israel's economic development and rescued itduring periods of financial crisis. American military assistance has strengthenedIsrael in wartime and helped preserve its military dominance in theMiddle East. Washington has given Israel extensive diplomatic support inwar and peace, and has helped insulate it from some of the adverse consequencesof its own actions. U.S. aid has also been a key ingredient in theprotracted Arab-Israeli peace process, with agreements such as the Camp

David Accords or the peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan resting on explicitpromises of increased American assistance. More than any othercountry, the United States has been Israel's great benefactor.

ECONOMIC AID

The most obvious indicator of Israel's favored position is the total amount offoreign aid it has received from America's taxpayers. As of

2005, direct U.S.economic and military assistance to Israel amounted to nearly $154 billion(in 2005 dollars), the bulk of it comprising direct grants rather than loans.2As discussed below, the actual total is significantly higher, because direct

U.S. aid is given under unusually favorable terms and the United States providesIsrael with other forms of material assistance that are not included inthe foreign assistance budget.Because this level of support is rarely questioned today, it is easy to forgetthat the "special relationship" that now exists did not emerge until severaldecades after Israel's founding. Prior to World War II, American leadersoccasionallyoffered rhetorical support for the Zionist goal of a Jewish homeland,but no president exerted much effort to advance that objective. PresidentHarry S. Truman did play a key role in supporting the establishment of a Jewishhomeland when he decided to back the UN partition plan in 1947 and torecognize Israel immediately after its declaration of independence in May1948. But both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations also realized thatembracing Israel too closely would jeopardize relations with the Arab worldand provide the Soviet Union with enticing opportunities to gain influence

in the Middle East. Accordingly, the United States sought to steer a middlecourse between Israel and its Arab neighbors during the 1950s; economic aidto Israel was modest and the United States provided hardly any direct militaryassistance.3 Israeli requests to purchase American weaponry were politely rejected,as were requests for a U.S. security guarantee.4

There were also several sharp diplomatic disagreements between Washingtonand Jerusalem during this period. When Israel ignored UN demandsthat it halt work on a canal to divert water from the Jordan River in September1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles promptly announced thatthe United States was suspending foreign assistance. The threat worked: Israelagreed to stop the project on October 27 and U.S. aid was restored.5Similar threats to halt American aid played a key role in convincing Israel towithdraw from the territory it had seized from Egypt in the 1956 Suez War.

THE GREAT BENEFACTOR

Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion saw the war as an opportunity forterritorial expansion, and he began the prewar discussions with Britain andFrance (the primary instigators of the attack on Egypt) by suggesting thatJordan be divided between Israel and Iraq and that Israel be given portionsof Lebanon and control over the Straits of Tiran.6 Britain and France werepreoccupied with Egypt and uninterested in this grand scheme. But Ben-Gurion made several statements following the conquest by the Israel DefenseForces (IDF) of the Sinai Peninsula (including a speech in the Knesseton November 7) suggesting that the 1949 armistice agreements were voidand that Israel intended to keep the lands it had just seized. When Eisenhowerthreatened to block all public and private aid to Israel, Ben-Gurionquickly backtracked, agreeing "in principle" to withdraw in exchange foradequate assurances of Israels security. Israel then worked to rally supportin the United States, a campaign that reduced Eisenhower's congressionalsupport and led him to make a nationally televised speech justifying his actions.Israel finally withdrew from all the territories it had conquered in thespring of 1957, in exchange for assurances regarding border security in Gazaand freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran.7

U.S.-Israeli relations had warmed by the late 1950s, but it was theKennedy administration that made the first tangible U.S. commitment to Israel'smilitary security.8 In December 1962, in fact, Kennedy told Israeli ForeignMinister Golda Meir that the United States

"has a special relationshipwith Israel in the Middle East really comparable only to that which it haswith Britain over a wide range of world affairs," adding that "I think it isquite clear that in case of an invasion the United States would come to thesupport of Israel. We have that capacity and it is growing."9 Kennedy soonthereafter authorized the first major sale of U.S. weaponry—Hawk antiaircraftmissiles—to Israel in 1963. This shift reflected a number of strategicconsiderations—such as the desire to balance Soviet arms sales to Egypt,dampen Israel's nuclear ambitions, and encourage Israel's leaders to respondfavorably to U.S. peace initiatives—but skillful Israeli diplomacy, the influenceof several pro-Israel advisers, and Kennedy's understandable desire tomaintain support from Jewish voters and donors played a role in his decisionas well.1 0 The Hawk sale opened the door to several additional weaponsdeals, most notably the sale of more than two hundred M48A battle tanks in1964. In an attempt to disguise American involvement and thereby limitrepercussions in the Arab world, the tanks were shipped to Israel by WestGermany, which in turn received replacements from the United States.1 1

In terms of the absolute amount of U.S. aid, however, the real sea change

took place following the Six-Day War in June 1967. After averaging roughly$63 million annually from 1949 to 1965 (more than 95 percent of which waseconomic assistance and food aid), average aid increased to $102 million peryear from 1966 to 1970. Support soared to $634.5 million in 1971 (roughly85 percent was military assistance) and more than quintupled after the YomKippur War in 1973. Israel became the largest annual recipient of U.S. foreignassistance in 1976, a position it has retained ever since. Support for Israelshifted from loans to direct grants during this period, with the bulk of

U.S. aid consisting of military assistance rather than economic or technicalsupport. According to Clyde Mark of the Congressional Research Service(CRS), the official research arm of the U.S. Congress, "Israel preferred thatthe aid be in the form of loans, rather than grants, to avoid having a U.S. militarycontingent in Israel to oversee a grant program. Since 1974, some or allof U.S. military aid to Israel has been in the form of loans for which repaymentis waived. Technically, the assistance is called loans, but as a practicalmatter, the military aid is grant."12Israel now receives on average about $3 billion in direct foreign assistanceeach year, an amount that is roughly one-sixth of America s direct foreignassistance budget and equal to about 2 percent of Israel's GDR Inrecent years, about 75 percent of U.S. assistance has been military aid, withthe remainder broken down into various forms of economic aid.1 3 In percapita terms, this level of direct foreign assistance amounts to a direct subsidyof more than $500 per year for each Israeli. By comparison, the numbertwo recipient of American foreign aid, Egypt, receives only $20 per person,and impoverished countries such as Pakistan and Haiti receive roughly $5per person and $27 per person, respectively.14 Jerusalem and Washingtonagreed to gradually phase out economic assistance beginning in 1997, andCongress has reduced economic aid to Israel by $120 million per year sinceFY1999. This step has been partly compensated for by a parallel U.S. commitmentto increase its military aid by $60 million per year, and by congressionalwillingness to vote supplemental aid packages, such as the $ 1.2 billionprovided to support implementation of the 1998 Wye Agreement (in whichIsrael agreed to withdraw forces from parts of the West Bank) and an additional$1 billion in foreign military financing (FMF) aid in 2003 to help Israelprepare for the war with Iraq.1 5

Three billion dollars per year is generous, but it is hardly the whole story.As noted above, the canonical $3 billion figure omits a substantial numberof other benefits and thus significantly understates the actual level of U.S.support. Indeed, in 1991, Representative Lee Hamilton (D-IN) told re

porters that Israel was one of three countries whose aid "substantially exceedsthe popularly quoted figures" and said the annual figure was in factmore than $4.3 billion.1 6

The discrepancy arises in part because Israel gets its aid under more favorableterms than most other recipients of U.S. assistance.1 7

Most recipientsof American foreign aid get their money in quarterly installments, butsince 1982, the annual foreign aid bill has included a special clause specifyingthat Israel is to receive its entire annual appropriation in the first thirtydays of the fiscal year.1 8 This is akin to receiving your entire annual salary onJanuary 1 and thus being able to earn interest on the unspent portion untilyou used it.

Because the U.S. government normally runs budget deficits, transferringthe aid all at once requires it to borrow the necessary amount of money upfront, and the CRS estimates that it costs U.S. taxpayers "between $50 and$60 million per year to borrow funds for the early, lump-sum payment."19Moreover, the U.S. government ends up paying Israel additional interestwhen Israel reinvests the unspent portion in U.S. treasury bills. Accordingto the U.S. embassy in Israel, early transfer of FMF funds has enabled Israelto earn some $660 million in extra interest as of 2004. 2 0 Israel has also received"excess defense articles" (surplus U.S. military equipment providedto friendly nations either free of charge or heavily discounted) beyond thenormal limits imposed by the 1976 Arms Export Control Act. This limit wasoriginally set at $250 million (excluding ships), but the appropriations billof November 5, 1990, authorized a "one-time only" transfer to Israel of$700 million worth of surplus U.S. equipment in 1991.2 1

Likewise, the FMF program normally requires recipients of U.S. militaryassistance to spend all of the money here in the United States, to help keepAmerican defense workers employed. Congress grants Israel a special exemptionin the annual appropriations bill, however, authorizing it to useabout one out of every four U.S. military aid dollars to subsidize its own defense

industry. "No other recipient of U.S. military assistance has beengranted this benefit," notes a recent CRS report, and "the proceeds to Israelidefense firms from purchases with U.S. funds have allowed the Israeli defenseindustry to achieve necessary economies of scale and become highlysophisticated." By 2004, in fact, Israel, a comparatively small country, hadbecome the world's eighth largest arms supplier.22

Along with Egypt and Turkey, Israel is also permitted to apply its entireFMF funding to meet its current year obligations, rather than having to setaside portions to cover expected costs in subsequent years. According to the

U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), this "cash flow" method of financing"permits a country to order more defense goods and services than it normallycould because less money must be reserved when a contract issigned."2 3 Israel can make its payments as long as the United States continuesto provide similar amounts of aid, a situation that makes it harder for theUnited States to reduce its support in the future. And in a further manipulationof the methods of financing, recipients of U.S. aid are normally expectedto draw down FMF loans and grants at an equal rate, but Israel isallowed to draw down the grant (or waived) portions of its FMF allocationbefore it uses any loaned portions. By delaying the date on which the loan isactivated, this procedure reduces the amount of interest that Israel owesUncle Sam.2 4Remarkably, Israel is the only recipient of U.S. economic aid that doesnot have to account for how it is spent. Aid to other countries is allocated forspecific development projects (HIV/AIDS prevention, counternarcotics programs,children's health, democracy promotion, improving education, etc.),but Israel receives a direct lump-sum cash transfer.25 This exemption makesit virtually impossible for the United States to prevent its subsidies from beingused for purposes that it opposes, such as building settlements on theWest Bank. According to the CRS's Clyde Mark, "Because U.S. economicaid is given to Israel as direct government-to-government budgetary authoritywithout any specific project accounting, and money is fungible, there is noway to tell how Israel uses U.S. aid."26

Another form of U.S. support is loan guarantees that permit Israel to borrowmoney from commercial banks at lower rates, thereby saving millions ofdollars in interest payments. Israel requested and received approximately$ 10 billion in loan guarantees from the United

States in the early 1990s inorder to finance the costs of settling Soviet Jews immigrating to Israel. The

U.S. government does not provide funds directly in a loan guarantee—itmerely undertakes to reimburse private lenders in the event of a default—and advocates of these measures often claim that there is no real expenditureand thus no real cost to the U.S. taxpayer. Loan guarantees do havebudgetary consequences, however, because Congress must appropriatefunds to cover an estimate of what could be lost over the life of the loanbased on its net present value. Estimates for the cost of the 1992 loan guaranteerange from $100 million to $800 million.2 7Washington authorized a second round of loan guarantees in 2003, totalingnearly $9 billion, to help Israel prepare for the war with Iraq, deal witha protracted economic crisis, and cover the costs imposed by the Second

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Palestinian Intifada. Because Israel is legally barred from using U.S. economicaid in the Occupied Territories, the actual amount allocated waseventually reduced by an amount equivalent to Israel's estimated expenditureson settlement construction. This reduction is not as severe as it maysound, however, as it involved no decrease in direct U.S. aid and merelyforced Israel to pay a slightly higher interest rate on a small portion of theborrowed funds.

In addition to government subsidized aid and loan guarantees, Israel receivesan estimated $2 billion annually in private donations from Americancitizens, roughly half in direct payments and half via the purchase of Stateof Israel Bonds.2 8 These bonds receive favorable treatment in U.S. law; although

the interest paid on them is not tax-exempt, Congress specifically exemptedthem from the provisions of the 1984 Deficit Reduction Act, whichimposed additional tax penalties on other bonds with yields below the federalrate.2 9 Similarly, private donations to charities in most foreign countriesare not tax deductible, but many private donations to Israel are, due to aspecial clause in the U.S.-Israel income tax treaty.3 0

This flow of money to Israel has been a crucial boon to the general economy,but private contributions from U.S. citizens have also played an importantstrategic role, going back to the preindependence era.3 1 In his memoirs,Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres revealed that private contributions fromwealthy diaspora Jews (including several Americans) had helped finance Israel'sclandestine nuclear program in the 1950s and 1960s. According to theIsraeli journalist Michael Karpin, a key coordinator of this fund-raising effortwas Abraham Feinberg, a well-connected U.S. businessman, philanthropist,and political adviser, and contributors to the campaign reportedly includedCanadian beverage magnate Samuel Bronfman and several members of theRothschild family. Feinberg never divulged the names of the Americandonors, however, and his own role has never been officially confirmed.3 2 Today,groups like the Friends of Israel Defense Forces raise funds in theUnited States to "support social, educational, cultural and recreational programsand facilities for the young men and women soldiers of Israel whodefend the Jewish homeland." One recent dinner in New York reportedlyraised some $18 million in contributions, which are tax deductible under

U.S. law.33Other private donations from U.S. citizens have also helped subsidize Israel'sprolonged campaign to colonize the Occupied Territories. These contributionsto settlements in the West Bank (including those made via U.S.charities or other "Friends of . . ." organizations) are not supposed to be tax

exempt in the United States, but such restrictions are inherently difficult toenforce and were loosely monitored in the past.3 4 For example, in order tosafeguard the tax-exempt status of U.S. donations to the Jewish Agency forIsrael (a quasi-governmental organization that helps settle new arrivals in Israel),the task of aiding settlements in the Occupied Territories was takenout of the agency's Settlement Department and assigned to a new "SettlementDivision" within the World Zionist Organization (WZO). But as GershomGorenberg points out, "The Division was a shell that contracted allservices from the Jewish Agency . . . The change kept the U.S. Jewish

philanthropiesclear of the occupied territories. On the ground, the samepeople continued the same efforts."3 5 This problem was underscored whenan official Israeli government study directed by Talia Sasson, former chiefcriminal prosecutor, revealed that the Settlement Division of the WZO(which receives support from prominent Jewish organizations all over theworld) was actively involved in the creation of unauthorized settlements inthe Occupied Territories.36 More broadly, because Israeli charities operatebeyond the reach of U.S. tax authorities, donations from Jewish and Christianevangelical organizations are hard to monitor once they are transferredto Israel. In practice, therefore, the U.S. government cannot easily determinethe extent to which tax-exempt private donations are being diverted forunauthorized purposes.3 7

All this largesse is especially striking when one realizes that Israel is nota poor or devastated country like Afghanistan, Niger, Burma, or SierraLeone. On the contrary, Israel is now a modern industrial power. Its percapita income in 2006 was twenty-ninth in the world, according to the InternationalMonetary Fund, and is nearly double that of Hungary and theCzech Republic, substantially higher than Portugal's, South Korea's, or Taiwan's,and far outstrips every country in Latin America and Africa.3 8 It rankstwenty-third in the United Nations' 2006 Human Development Report andthirty-eighth in the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2005 "quality of life" rankings.39 Yet this comparatively prosperous state is America's biggest aid recipient,each year receiving sums that dwarf U.S. support for impoverishedstates such as Bangladesh, Bolivia, and Liberia. This anomaly is evenacknowledged by some of Israel's more fervent supporters in the UnitedStates. In 1997, for example, Mitchell Bard, the former editor of AI PAC 's

Near East Report, and Daniel Pipes, the hawkish founder of the pro-IsraelMiddle East Forum, wrote that "Israel has become an affluent country witha personal income rivaling Great Britain's, so the American willingness toprovide aid to Israel is no longer based purely on need."4 0

The United States has taken on other economic burdens for Israel's benefit,often as part of efforts to persuade Israel to accept or implement peaceagreements with its neighbors. As part of the 1975 disengagement agreementbetween Egypt and Israel, for example, Secretary of State HenryKissinger signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that committedthe United States to guarantee Israel's oil needs in the event of a crisis andto finance and stock "a supplementary strategic reserve" for Israel, at an estimatedcost of several hundred million dollars.41 The oil guarantee was reaffirmedduring the final peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel inMarch 1979 and has been quietly renewed ever since.4 2

Finally, the aid that the United States provides to several of Israel'sneighbors is at least partly intended to benefit Israel as well. Egypt and Jordanare the number two and three recipients of U.S. foreign aid, but most ofthis money should be seen as a reward for good behavior—specifically, theirwillingness to sign peace treaties with Israel. Egypt received $71.7 million in

U.S. aid in 1974, but it got $1.127 billion in 1975 and $1.320 billion in1976 (in constant 2005 dollars) following completion of the Sinai II disengagementagreement. U.S. aid to Egypt reached $2.3 billion in 1978 andsoared to a whopping $5.9 billion in 1979, the year the Egypt-Israeli peacetreaty was signed. Cairo still gets about $2 billion annually.43 Similarly, Jordanreceived $76 million in direct aid in 1994 and only $57 million in 1995,but Congress rewarded King Hussein's decision to sign a peace treaty in1994 by forgiving Jordan's $700 million debt to the United States and removingother restrictions on U.S. aid. Since 1997, U.S. aid to Jordan has averagedroughly $566 million annually.44 U.S. willingness to reward Egyptand Jordan in this way is yet another manifestation of Washington's generositytoward the Jewish state.MILITARY ASSISTANCE

These various forms of economic assistance have been and remain importantto Israel, but the bulk of U.S. support is now committed to preserving Israel'smilitary supremacy in the Middle East.4 5 Not only does Israel receive accessto top-drawer U.S. weaponry (F-15 and F-16

aircraft, Blackhawk helicopters,cluster munitions, "smart bombs," etc.), it has also become linked to the U.S.defense and intelligence establishments through a diverse array of formalagreements and informal links. According to the Congressional Research

Service, "U.S. military aid has helped transform Israel's armed forces into oneof the most technologically sophisticated militaries in the world."46

Moreover, according to the Wall Street Journal, Israel "enjoys unusuallywide latitude in spending the [military assistance] funds."47 The DefenseSecurity Cooperation Agency (DSCA) handles almost all the purchasingand monitors U.S. aid for all other military aid recipients, but Israel dealsdirectlywith military contractors for virtually all of its purchases and then getsreimbursed from its aid account.4 8 Israel is also the only country where contractsfor less than $500,000 are exempt from prior U.S. review.49

The potential risks inherent in these comparatively lax oversight arrangementswere revealed in the early 1990s, when the head of Israeli Air Forceprocurement, Brigadier General Rami Dotan, was found to have embezzledand illegally diverted millions of dollars of U.S. aid. According to the WallStreet Journal, Dotan (who eventually pleaded guilty in Israel and received alengthy jail sentence) reportedly "parceled out work orders to stay under the$500,000 threshold." Nonetheless, the head of DSCA's predecessor, theDefense Security Assistance Agency, Lieutenant General Teddy Allen, subsequentlytold a congressional subcommittee that the Department of Defense

inspector general's recommendation that the aid program for Israel be"revamped" had been rejected because it might cause "turbulence in ourrelations" with Israel.5 0

In addition to the economic and military aid already described, theUnited States has provided Israel with nearly $3 billion to develop weaponslike the Lavi aircraft, the Merkava tank, and the Arrow missile.5 1 These projectswere funded through the U.S. Department of Defense and often portrayedas joint research and development efforts, but the United States didnot need these weapons and never intended to purchase them for its ownuse. The Lavi project was eventually canceled on cost-effectiveness grounds(with much of the cancellation cost being borne by the United States), butthe other weapons went into Israel's arsenal at Uncle Sam's expense.5 2 TheFY2004 U.S. defense budget included a $136 million request for the Arrow,for example, with $66 million allocated for additional improvements to thesystem and $70 million authorized for the production of additional units.Thus, the money that Washington pays to help Israel's defense industry developor produce these "joint weapons projects" is in reality another form ofsubsidy.53 The United States sometimes benefits from the technology thatIsraeli firms develop, but America would benefit even more if these fundswere used to support high-tech industries in the United States.

Military ties between the United States and Israel were upgraded in the

1980s, as part of the Reagan administrations effort to build an anti-Soviet"strategic consensus" in the Middle East. Secretary of Defense CasparWeinberger and Israeli Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon signed a memorandumof understanding in 1981 establishing a "framework for continuedconsultation and cooperation to enhance their national security."54 Thisagreement led to the creation of a Joint Security Assistance Planning Group(JSAP) and Joint Political Military Group, which meet regularly to review Israel'said requests and to coordinate military plans, joint exercises, and logisticalarrangements. Although Israeli leaders had hoped for a formal treatyof alliance and were disappointed by the limited nature of the frameworkagreement, it was a more formal expression of a U.S. commitment than earlierpresidential statements, such as Kennedy's private remarks to GoldaMeirin 1962.

Despite tensions over a wide array of issues—U.S. arms sales to

SaudiArabia, the 1981 bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor, Israel's annexation of theGolan Heights in December 1981, its invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and itsabrupt rejection of the "Reagan Plan" for peace in September 1982—securitycooperation between Israel and the United States increased steadily in theReagan years. Joint military exercises began in 1984, and in 1986 Israelbecame one of three foreign countries invited to participate in the U.S.Strategic Defense Initiative (aka "Star Wars"). Finally, in 1988, a new memorandumof agreement reaffirmed the "close partnership between Israel andthe United States" and designated Israel a "Major Non-NATO Ally," alongwith Australia, Egypt, Japan, and South Korea. States enjoying this statusare eligible to purchase a wider array of U.S. weapons at lower prices, getpriority delivery on war surplus matériel, and participate in joint researchand development projects and U.S. counterterrorism initiatives. Commercialfirms from these states also get preferential treatment when bidding for

U.S. defense contracts.5 5Security links between the two countries have expanded ever since. TheUnited States began prepositioning military supplies in Israel in 1989, andCongress voted in 2006 to increase the stockpile from roughly $100 millionto $400 million by 2008.5 6 This policy has been justified as a way to enhancethe Pentagon's ability to respond quickly to a regional crisis, but prepositioningU.S. supplies in Israel is actually an inefficient way to prepare for thiscontingency and the Pentagon has never been enthusiastic about this policy.According to Shai Feldman, former head of Tel Aviv University's Jaffe Instituteof Strategic Studies, "Present arrangements permit the storage only ofmateriel that could also be used in an emergency by Israeli forces. In the

view of Pentagon planners, this implies that the United States cannot be absolutelycertain that arms and ammunition stored in Israel would be availablein a crisis situation. Moreover, this 'dual use' arrangement means thatinstead of storing weapons and ordnance for pre-designated U.S. units,weapons would have to be distributed from general stocks under crisis conditionsand then integrated into different combat units, creating a logisticalnightmare."57 The real purpose of the stockpile program is to enhance Israel'smatériel reserves, and it is hardly surprising that Ynetnews, a Web newsservice affiliated with the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, reported inDecember 2006 that "a great portion of the American equipment stored inIsrael . . . was used for combat in the summer [2006] war in Lebanon."5 8

Building on the other working groups created during the 1980s, theUnited States and Israel established a Joint Anti-Terrorism Working Groupin 1996 and set up an electronic "hotline" between the Pentagon and Israel'sMinistry of Defense. Further cementing the links between the two states,Israel was given access to the U.S. satellite-based missile warning system in1997. Then, in 2001, the two states established an annual "interagencystrategic dialogue" to discuss "long-term issues." The latter forum was temporarilysuspended during a dispute over Israeli sales of American militarytechnology to China, but it reconvened in November 2005.5 9

As one would expect, U.S.-Israeli security cooperation also extends tothe realm of intelligence. Cooperation between U.S. and Israeli intelligenceservices dates back to the late 1950s, and by 1985 the two countries had reportedlysigned some two dozen intelligence-sharing arrangements. Israelgave the United States access to captured Soviet weaponry and to reportsfrom émigrés from the Soviet bloc, while the United States provided Israelwith satellite imagery during the 1973 October War and prior to the 1976Entebbe hostage rescue, and reportedly helped finance several Israeli intelligenceoperations in Africa.6 0 In the early 1980s, the United States evengave Israel access to certain forms of intelligence that it denied its closestNATO allies. In particular, Israel reportedly received almost unlimited accessto intelligence from the sophisticated KH-11 reconnaissance satellite("not only the information, but the photos themselves," according to thehead of Israeli military intelligence), while British access to the same sourcewas much more limited.61 Access to this data was restricted following Israel'sraid on Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981, but the first President Bush is believedto have authorized the transfer of real-time satellite information about Iraq'sScud attacks during the 1991 Gulf War.6 2

In contrast to Washington's long-standing opposition to the spread of

weapons of mass destruction, the United States has tacitly supported Israel'seffort to maintain regional military superiority by turning a blind eyetoward its various clandestine WM D programs, including its possessionof upward of two hundred nuclear weapons.6 3 The U.S. government haspressed dozens of states to sign the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT),but American leaders did little to pressure Israel to halt its nuclear programand sign the agreement. The Kennedy administration clearly wanted to restrainIsrael's nuclear ambitions in the early 1960s, and it eventually persuadedIsrael to permit U.S. scientists to tour Israel's nuclear researchfacility at Dimona to ascertain whether Israel was trying to produce a nuclearbomb. The Israeli government repeatedly denied that it had a weaponsprogram, dragged its feet in scheduling visits, and imposed onerous restrictionson the inspectors' access when visits did occur. Thus, the first U.S.visit, on May 18, 1961, involved just two American scientists and lasted onlyfour days, only one of them spent at the Dimona site. According to WarrenBass, "Israel's strategy was to permit a visit . . . but ensure that the inspectorsdid not find anything." Pressed to allow a follow-up visit a year later, theIsraelis unexpectedly invited U.S. Atomic Energy Commission officials inspectinga different Israeli facility to make an impromptu tour of Dimona.As Bass notes, this visit "hardly merits the name 'inspection,'" but theKennedy administration "did not seem eager to pick a fight."64

Kennedy stepped up the pressure the following year, however, sendingboth Ben-Gurion and his successor, Levi Eshkol, several stern letters demanding

biannual inspections "in accord with international standards" andwarning that "this Government's commitment to and support of Israel couldbe seriously jeopardized" if the United States were unable to resolve its concernsabout Israel's nuclear ambitions.6 5 Kennedy's threats convinced Israel'sleaders to permit additional visits, but the concession did not lead to compliance.As Eshkol reportedly told his colleagues after receiving Kennedy's July1963 démarche: "What am I frightened of? His man will come, and he willactually be told that he can visit [the Dimona site] and go anywhere hewishes, but when he wants a door opened at some place or another then[Emanuel] Prat [head of construction at Dimona] will tell him 'Not that.'"6 6On other visits, inspectors were not permitted to bring in outside instrumentsor take samples.

As the more recent cases of Iraq and North Korea remind us, such obfuscatorytactics are part of the standard playbook for all clandestine proliferators.U.S. officials remained suspicious about Jerusalem's nuclear plans,but Israel's deception worked because neither Kennedy nor his successor,

Lyndon Johnson, was willing to withhold U.S. support if Israel were notmore forthcoming. As a result, notes Avner Cohen in his detailed history ofIsraels nuclear program, "the Israelis were able to determine the rules of the[U.S.] visits and the Johnson administration chose not to confront Israel onthe issue, fearing that Israel would end the arrangement . . . Kennedythreatened both Ben Gurion and [Levi] Eshkol that noncompliance . . .could jeopardize American commitment to Israel's security and well being,'but Johnson was unwilling to risk an American-Israeli crisis over the issue."6 7 "Instead of inspections every six months," writes Bass, "in practiceJohnson settled for a quick visit once a year or so."6 8 And when CIA DirectorRichard Helms came to the White House in 1968 to inform Johnson that

U.S. intelligence had concluded that Israel had in fact acquired a nuclearcapability, Johnson told him to make sure that nobody else was shown theevidence, including Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of DefenseRobert McNamara. According to the journalist Seymour Hersh, "Johnson'spurpose in chasing Helms—and his intelligence—away was clear: he didnot want to know what the CIA was trying to tell him, for once he acceptedthat information, he would have to act on it. By 1968, the President had nointention of doing

anything to stop the Israeli bomb."6 9In addition to its nuclear arsenal, Israel maintains active chemical andbiological weapons programs and has yet to ratify either the Chemical orBiological Weapons Convention.7 0 The irony is hard to miss: the UnitedStates has pressured many other states to join the NPT, imposed sanctionson countries that have defied U.S. wishes and acquired nuclear weaponsanyway, gone to war in 2003 to prevent Iraq from pursuing WMD, and contemplatedattacking Iran and North Korea for the same reason. Yet Washingtonhas long subsidized an ally whose clandestine WM D activities arewell-known and whose nuclear arsenal has given several of its neighbors apowerful incentive to seek WM D themselves.

With the partial exception of Soviet support for Cuba, it is hard to thinkof another instance where one country has provided another with a similarlevel of material aid over such an extended period.7 1 America's willingness toprovide some support to Israel is not surprising, of course, because U.S.leaders have long favored Israel's existence and understood that it faced ahostile threat environment. As discussed below and in Chapter 2, U.S. leadersalso saw aid to Israel as a way to advance broader foreign policy goals.Nonetheless, the sheer magnitude of U.S. aid is remarkable. As we show inChapter 3, Israel was stronger than its neighbors before significant Americanmilitary aid commenced, and it is now a prosperous country. U.S. aid

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has undoubtedly been useful for Israel, but it may not have been essential toits survival.

The most singular feature of U.S. support for Israel is its increasinglyunconditional

nature. President Eisenhower could credibly threaten to withholdaid after the Suez War (though even he faced significant congressionalopposition when he did), but those days are long past. Since the mid-1960s,Israel has continued receiving generous support even when it took actionsAmerican leaders thought were unwise and contrary to U.S. interests. Israelgets its aid despite its refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and itsvarious WMD programs. It gets its aid when it builds settlements in the OccupiedTerritories (losing only a small amount through reductions in loanguarantees), even though the U.S. government opposes this policy. It alsogets its aid when it annexes territory it has conquered (as it did on the GolanHeights and in Jerusalem), sells U.S. military technology to potential enemieslike China, conducts espionage operations on U.S. soil, or uses U.S.weapons in ways that violate U.S. law (such as the use of cluster munitionsin civilian areas in Lebanon). It gets additional aid when it makes concessionsfor peace, but it rarely loses American support when it takes actionsthat make peace more elusive. And it gets its aid even when Israeli leadersrenege on pledges made to U.S. presidents. Menachem Begin promisedRonald Reagan that he would not lobby against the proposed sale of AWACSaircraft to Saudi Arabia in 1981, for example, but Begin then went up toCapitol Hill and told a Senate panel that he opposed the deal.7 2

One might think that U.S. generosity would give Washington considerableleverage over Israel's conduct, but this has not been the case. When dealingwith Israel, in fact, U.S. leaders can usually elicit cooperation only by offeringadditional carrots (increased assistance) rather than employing sticks (threatsto withhold aid). For example, the Israeli Cabinet agreed to publicly endorseUN Resolution 242—which, originally passed in November 1967, called forIsrael's withdrawal from territories seized in the Six-Day War—only after PresidentRichard Nixon gave private assurances that Israel would receive additionalU.S. aircraft.73 Moreover, its acceptance of the cease-fire agreement thatended the so-called War of Attrition with Egypt (a protracted series of air,artillery,and infantry clashes that began along the Suez Canal in March 1969 andcontinued until July 1970) was bought by a U.S. pledge to accelerate aircraftdeliveries to Israel, to provide advanced electronic countermeasures againstEgypt's Soviet-supplied antiaircraft missiles, and, more generally, to "maintainthe balance of power."74 According to Shimon Peres (who served as Ministerwithout Portfolio during this period), "As to the question of U.S. pressure on

us to accept their programme, I would say they handled us more

with a carrotthan with a stick; in any event they never threatened us with sanctions."75

This pattern continued through the 1970s, with Presidents Nixon, Ford,and Carter pledging ever-larger sums of aid in the course of the disengagementtalks with Egypt and during the negotiations that led to the 1978Camp David Accords and the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Specifically,U.S. aid to Israel increased from $1.9 billion in 1975 to $6.29 billionin 1976 (following completion of the Sinai II agreement) and from $4.4 billionin 1978 to $10.9 billion in 1979 (following the final peace treaty withEgypt).7 6 As discussed below, the United States also made a number ofother commitments to Israel in order to persuade it to sign. In much thesame way, the Clinton administration gave Israel increased assistance aspart of the peace treaty with Jordan in 1994, and Clinton's efforts to advancethe Oslo peace process led him to pledge an additional $1.2 billion in militaryaid to Israel to win Israel's acceptance of the 1998 Wye Agreement.Prime Minister Netanyahu suspended the Wye Agreement shortly after itwas signed, however, following a violent confrontation between a Palestiniancrowd and two Israeli citizens.7 7 According to U.S. negotiator DennisRoss, "It was hard to escape the conclusion that Bibi [Netanyahu] . . . wasseizing on this incident to avoid further implementation. This was unfortunate,because the Palestinians were working diligently to carry out most oftheir commitments under Wye, particularly in the area of making arrests andfighting terror."78 Yet as the Israeli scholar Abraham Ben-Zvi observes, "TheClinton administration's frustration with Netanyahu's style was rarely translatedinto policy that harmed the American-Israeli special relationship."79

Indeed, attempts to use America's potential leverage face significant obstaclesand are rarely attempted, even when U.S. officials are deeply upset by

Israeli actions. When President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State HenryKissinger grew impatient with Israeli intransigence during the disengagementnegotiations with Egypt in 1975, a threat to curtail aid and conduct afar-reaching reassessment of U.S. policy was derailed when seventy-six senatorssigned a letter sponsored by AIPAC demanding that Ford remain "responsive"to Israel's economic and military needs. With their ability toreduce U.S. aid effectively blocked, Ford and Kissinger had little choice butto resume "step-by-step" diplomacy and try to gain Israeli concessions by offeringadditional inducements.8 0

President Jimmy Carter was similarly upset by Israeli Prime MinisterMenachem Begins failure to implement the full terms of the 1978 CampDavid Accords (the breakthrough agreement that created the framework for

the subsequent peace treaty between Egypt and Israel), but he never tried tolink U.S. assistance to Israeli compliance.8 1 Clinton administration officialswere equally frustrated when Prime Ministers Netanyahu and Barak did notlive up to all of Israel's commitments in the Oslo agreements, and Clintonwas reportedly "furious" when Barak reneged on a commitment to transferthree Jerusalem villages to Palestinian control, declaring that Barak was makinghim a "false prophet" in the eyes of another foreign leader, Yasser Arafat.Clinton also erupted when Barak tried to shift ground during the 2000 CampDavid Summit, telling him, "I can't go see Arafat with a retrenchment! Youcan sell it; there is no way I can. This is not real. This is not serious."8 2 YetClinton did not react to these maneuvers by threatening to withhold support.

To be sure, America has occasionally withheld aid temporarily in order toexpress displeasure over particular Israeli actions, but such gestures are usuallysymbolic and short-lived, and have little lasting effect on Israeli conduct.In 1977, for example, Israel used U.S. armored personnel carriers tointervene in southern Lebanon (a step that violated both the Arms ExportControl Act requirement that U.S. arms be used only for "legitimate self defense"and Prime Minister Menachem Begins pledge to take no action inLebanon without first consulting Washington) and then denied having doneso. After sophisticated intelligence information exposed Israel's deception,the Carter administration threatened to terminate future military shipmentsand Begin ordered that the equipment be withdrawn.8 3

A similar example is the Reagan administration's decision to suspend the1981 memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation followingIsrael's de facto annexation of the Golan Heights, but Reagan later implementedthe key provisions of the agreement even though Israel neverreversed the annexation. The United States also halted shipments of clustermunitions after Israel violated prior agreements regarding their use duringthe 1982 invasion of Lebanon, but began supplying them again in 1988.8 4

U.S. pressure also helped persuade Israel not to conduct a full-fledged assaulton the PLO forces that had taken refuge in Beirut after Israel's 1982invasion, but Israel's leaders were themselves reluctant to take this step andthus did not need much convincing.8 5In 1991, the first Bush administration pressured the Shamir governmentto stop building settlements and to attend a planned peace conference bywithholding the $10 billion loan guarantee, but the suspension lasted only afew months and the guarantees were approved once Yitzhak Rabin replacedShamir as prime minister.8 6 Israel agreed to halt construction of new settlementsbut continued to expand the existing blocs, and the number of set

tiers in the Occupied Territories increased by 8,000 (14.7 percent) in 1991,by 6,900 (10.3 percent) in 1993, by 6,900 (9.7 percent) in 1994, and by7,300 (9.1 percent) in 1996, rates significantly higher than Israel's overallpopulation growth during these years.8 7

A similar episode occurred in 2003, when the second Bush administrationtried to signal its opposition to Israel's "security wall" in the West Bank

by making a token reduction in U.S. loan guarantees to Israel. Withholdingthe entire guarantee or reducing direct foreign aid might have had an effect,but Bush merely withheld a portion of the loan guarantee equivalent to theestimated costs of those portions of the wall that were encroaching on Palestinianlands. Israel simply had to pay a higher interest rate on a small portionof its loan, a penalty amounting to a few million dollars. When compared tothe billions of dollars of U.S. aid that Israel already gets (and expects to getin the future), this was barely a slap on the wrist. It had no discernible effecton Israel's behavior.

DIPLOMATIC PROTECTION AND WARTIME SUPPORT

In addition to these tangible forms of economic and military aid, the UnitedStates provides Israel with consistent diplomatic support. Between 1972and 2006, Washington vetoed forty-two UN Security Council resolutionsthat were critical of Israel. That number is greater than the combined totalof all the vetoes cast by all the other Security Council members for the sameperiod and amounts to slightly more than half of all American vetoes duringthese years.8 8 There were also numerous resolutions focusing on Israel thatnever reached a vote in the Security Council due to the threat of an Americanveto. In 2002, U.S. Ambassador to the UN John Negroponte reportedlytold a closed meeting of the Security Council that the United States wouldhenceforth veto any resolutions condemning Israel that did not simultaneouslycondemn terrorism in general and specifically mention Islamic Jihad,Hamas, and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade by name.8 9 The United States hasvoted to censure Israel on a few occasions, but only after particularly egregiousIsraeli actions, when the resolution in question offered only mild criticisms,or when Washington wanted to communicate a degree of displeasurewith Israeli intransigence.9 0

Outside the Security Council, the United States routinely backs Israelwhenever the UN General Assembly passes one of the many resolutionscondemning Israeli behavior or calling for action on behalf of the Palestini

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ans. Although these resolutions are nonbinding and largely symbolic, Washington'sstance often puts it at odds with most of its allies and in the companyof a tiny handful of other states. To take a typical example, UN GeneralAssembly Resolution 59/124, on "Israeli Practices Affecting the HumanRights of the Palestinian People," passed by a vote of 149-7 (with 22 abstainingand 13 nonvoting) on December

10, 2004. Among the many nationssupporting the resolution were Japan, Germany, France, China, andGreat Britain. The six countries that joined with the United States to opposethe resolution were Israel, Australia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia,Nauru, and Palau.9 1

Similarly, when Arab countries have tried to raise the issue of Israel's undeclarednuclear arsenal within the International Atomic Energy Agency,Washington has stepped in to prevent the organization from placing thematter on its agenda. As Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Jonathan Peledtold the Jewish newspaper Forward in 2003, "The Arabs do this every year,but in order to have a comprehensive debate amid a consensus on a resolutionagainst Israel, you need the okay of the board of governors [of theIAEA] and you don't have it" due to Washington's influence on the board.9 2

America's willingness to take Israel's side in diplomacy and war has increasedsignificantly over time. During the 1950s, as previously noted, theEisenhower administration forced Israel to withdraw from the territory ithad seized during the Suez War, and they successfully halted unilateral Israeliattempts to divert key water resources. Since the early 1960s, however,the United States has become more committed to protecting Israel's interestsduring major confrontations and in the subsequent negotiations. Washingtonhas not given Jerusalem everything it wanted, but U.S. support hasbeen consistent and considerable.

When an escalating series of clashes between Israel and Syria in1966-67 led Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser to order troops backinto the Sinai in May, alarming Israel's leaders and raising the danger of a

wider war, the Johnson administration was nonetheless convinced that Israelwas militarily superior to its Arab adversaries and exaggerating the dangerof an Arab attack.9 3 General Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefsof Staff, informed Johnson, "Our best estimate was that if there were a war,that the Israelis would win it in five to seven days," and Johnson himself toldIsrael Foreign Minister Abba Eban that if Egypt attacked, "you will whip hellout of them."9 4 Key Israeli leaders privately agreed with this assessment butcontinued to send Washington alarming reports as part of a deliberate campaignto elicit sympathy and support.9 5

Based on its own appraisals, the United States tried to prevent the outbreakof war by convincing the Israeli government to refrain from usingforce and to pursue a diplomatic solution.9 6 President Johnson calledEgypt's decision to close the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping on May 26"illegal" and was sympathetic to Israel's concerns, but he did not want tocommit U.S. forces in light of American involvement in Vietnam and refusedto make a blanket pledge to come to Israel's aid. His efforts to restrainIsrael gradually softened, however, and by the first week of June, Johnsonand several of his advisers were hinting to Israeli officials that the UnitedStates would not object if Israel acted, cautioning that they should not expectU.S. help if things went badly. Secretary of State Dean Rusk told a journalistthat "I don't think it is our business to restrain anyone," and MichaelBrecher reports that by June 3, "the perceived [Israeli] impression was that,if Israel took the initiative . . . the United States would not take an unfriendlyview." In effect, Johnson gave the Israelis what one expert latercalled a "yellow light" for an attack.9 7 The reasons for Johnson's shift remainobscure, although pressure from several pro-Israel friends and advisers, aletter-writing campaign organized by the Israeli embassy, and the growingsense that Israel was going to strike anyway may all have played a role.9 8

The United States did not put significant pressure on Israel to halt thefighting until it had emerged victorious and did not criticize Israel's actionafter the war. Indeed, when the Soviet Union threatened to intervene followingIsrael's occupation of the Golan Heights (which threatened Syria,the Soviets' ally), the president ordered the U.S. Sixth Fleet to move closerto Israel in order to deter Soviet interference. In sharp contrast with the1956 Suez War, the Johnson administration made it clear there would beno American pressure for an Israeli withdrawal except in the context of abroader peace agreement.9 9 Nor did the United States insist on a full andcomplete accounting of the tragic attack on the reconnaissance ship USSLiberty by Israeli naval

and air forces on June 8, an event whose origins remaincontested.10 0 The United States may not have given Israel the diplomaticand military protection it originally sought at the onset of the crisis,but there was no doubt where America's sympathies lay.

The United States tilted even more strongly toward Israel during the1969-70 War of Attrition. Aid to Israel increased during the fighting, consistentwith Nixon and Kissinger's belief that steadfast support for Israel wouldreveal the limited value of Soviet aid and eventually convince Moscow'sArab clients to realign with the United States. Although the Nixon administrationdid not give Israel all the weapons it asked for, which occasionally led

to sharp exchanges between the two governments, the United States didprovide increased arms supplies while doing relatively little to encourage Israeliconcessions in the various peace talks that occurred during this period.When the escalating violence raised new fears of a possible superpowerconfrontation,however, Washington took the lead in arranging a cease-fire andpersuaded Israel to accept it by promising significant aid increases.10 1 Amemorandum of understanding in 1972 committed the United States toprovide planes and tanks on a long-term basis, and Nixon and Kissingerpledged to consult Israel before offering any new peace proposals. By doingso, one of the world s two superpowers had in effect given a small country aquasi veto over subsequent diplomatic initiatives. By the early 1970s, writesWilliam Quandt, "United States Middle East policy consisted of little more

than open support for Israel," and Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban latertermed this period the "golden age" in U.S. arms supplies.10 2

U.S. support was even more dramatic during the October War in 1973.Nixon and Kissinger were initially confident that Israel would win a quickvictory and believed that America's postwar leverage would be maximized ifits support for Israel was not too overt and Israel did not win too decisively.As Kissinger recounts in his memoirs, "If Israel won overwhelmingly—as wefirst expected—we had to avoid becoming the focal point of all Arab resentments.We had to keep the Soviet Union from emerging as the Arabs' savior. . . If the unexpected happened and Israel was in difficulty, we wouldhave to do what was necessary to save it."10 3 Given these expectations andstrategic objectives, the United States responded slowly to Israel's initialrequestsfor help. When Israel encountered unexpected difficulties and beganrunning short of critical military supplies, however, Nixon and Kissinger ordereda full-scale airlift of vital military equipment, paid for with a $2.2 billiongrant of supplemental military aid.10 4 Although the tide of battle hadalready turned before significant U.S. aid arrived, the assistance boosted Israel'smorale and helped seal its victory.10 5 Unfortunately for the UnitedStates, the resupply effort also triggered an Arab oil embargo and productiondecrease that quickly sent world oil prices soaring and imposed significanteconomic costs on the United States and its allies.Within certain limits, U.S. diplomacy during the war favored Israel: theUnited States helped convince King Hussein of Jordan to remain on thesidelines, and Kissinger handled the cease-fire negotiations (most notably histalks with Soviet leaders in Moscow on October 21) with an eye toward preservingIsrael's freedom of action until the final stages of the war. Nixon hadinstructed Kissinger to tell Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev that

the United States "wanted to use the war to impose a comprehensive peacein the Middle East," but in Moscow Kissinger successfully pressed for asimple cease-fire that would leave Israel with the upper hand and facilitatesubsequent efforts to exclude the Soviet Union from the peace process. Accordingto the historian Kenneth Stein, "The American-compiled minutes ofthe three meetings that Kissinger attended with Brezhnev unequivocallyshow that he accurately and repeatedly represented Israeli interests toMoscow, almost totally contrary to Nixon's preferences." Israel's leaders

resentedwhat they saw as Soviet-American collusion to author a cease-fire,but as Stein notes, "Kissinger, while not representing Israel to the Kremlin,certainly presented Israel's concerns."10 6

When the Security Council passed a cease-fire resolution on October 22,calling for an end to all fighting within twelve hours, Kissinger permitted Israelto violate it in order to consolidate its military position. He had previously toldIsraeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz that Israel would be "well-advised" to usethe time afforded by his trip to Moscow to complete its military operations,and according to the National Security Archive, a Washington-based researchgroup that specializes in declassified U.S. sources, "Kissinger secretly gaveIsraeliauthorities a green light to breach [the] ceasefire agreement" in order to"buy time for Israeli military advances despite the impending ceasefire deadline."10 7 When the cease-fire broke down completely and the IDF surroundedEgypt's Third Army, prompting a blunt Soviet threat to intervene with its owntroops, Nixon and Kissinger ordered a worldwide military alert, issued a sharpwarning to Moscow to stay out, and told the Israelis it was now time to stopthe fighting.

Although there was considerable hard bargaining during the subsequent"step-by-step" diplomacy leading to the 1975 Sinai II disengagement agreement,the United States still worked to protect Israel's interests. In addition togiving Israel increased military aid, the United States pledged to "concert action"with Israel when preparing for a subsequent peace conference and gaveIsrael a de facto veto over PLO participation in any future peace talks. Indeed,Kissinger promised that the United States would not "recognize or negotiate"with the PLO so long as it did not recognize Israel's right to exist or accept UNResolutions 242 and 338 (the cease-fire resolutions that ended the 1967 and1973 wars, respectively, and called for Israel's withdrawal from occupied

territoriesalong with acknowledgment of its sovereignty and independence), apledge that Congress codified into law in 1984.10 8 According to the IsraelihistorianAvi Shlaim, "[Israeli Prime Minister] Rabin made it clear to Kissinger thatthe cabinet would not ratify the Sinai II [disengagement] agreement unless it

was accompanied by an American-Israeli agreement." Shlaim terms the resultingarrangements "an alliance with America in all but name."10 9

The United States came to Israels aid once again following its illconceivedinvasion of Lebanon in 1982. Amid escalating violence betweenIsrael and PLO forces in southern Lebanon, Israeli Defense Minister ArielSharon sought American approval for a military response intended to drivethe PLO from Lebanon, eliminate Syrian influence, and bring the leader ofthe Lebanese Christians, Bashir Gemayel, to power. U.S. Secretary of StateAlexander Haig appeared to give conditional approval for the scheme in histalks with Israeli officials—saying at one point that a hypothetical Israeliresponseshould be swift, "like a lobotomy"—though he probably did not knowthe full extent of Israel's ambitions and cautioned that Israel should act onlyif there were, as Haig put it, an "internationally recognized provocation."11 0Israel eventually invaded in June 1982 (even though Haig's criterion had notbeen met), but its ambitious plan to reorder Lebanese internal politics soonwent awry. Although the IDF quickly routed the PLO and Syrian forces, thePLO remnants took refuge in Beirut and the IDF could not remove themwithout suffering extensive casualties and causing massive harm to Lebanesecivilians. U.S. Special Envoy Philip Habib eventually negotiated a dealto end the siege and permit the PLO to withdraw, and several thousand U.S.marines were subsequently dispatched to Lebanon as part of a multinationalpeacekeeping force.

Gemayel's assassination in September thwarted Israel's hope of creatinga pro-Israel government in Lebanon, and the IDF then allowed Christianmilitias to enter the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, where they proceededto slaughter a large number of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians, with estimateddeath tolls ranging from roughly seven hundred to more than two thousand.11 1 Repeated efforts to end Lebanon's internal struggles and foreignoccupation failed, and U.S. personnel were gradually drawn into the intensifyingLebanese maelstrom. A suicide bomber struck the American embassyin April

1983, killing sixty-three people, and a truck bomb attack onthe marine barracks in October left 241 marines dead and paved the way fora complete U.S. withdrawal the following year.

Even though U.S. officials—including President Reagan himself—wereupset by Israel's conduct during the war, they did not try to punish Israel forits actions. Reagan did send Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin asharply worded letter on June 9, calling on him to accept a proposed ceasefirewith Syria, but the IDF's objectives vis-à-vis Syria had been accomplishedby that time and it involved no great sacrifice for Israel to agree.11 2

"Despite verbal protestations and other gestures and occasional genuine irritation,"notes the historian and diplomat Itamar Rabinovich, the UnitedStates "lent Israel the political support that enabled it to proceed with thewar for an unusually long time."11 3

Indeed, instead of sanctioning Israel for invading a neighboring country,Congress voted to give Israel an additional $250 million in military assistancein December 1982, over the strong objections of both President Reaganand his new secretary of state, George P. Shultz. As Shultz later recalled:

In early December [1982] .. . I got word that a supplement was movingthrough the lame-duck session of Congress to provide a $250 millionincrease in the amount of U.S. military assistance granted toIsrael: this in the face of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, its use of cluster

bombs, and its complicity in the Sabra and Shatila massacres! Wefought the supplement and fought it hard. President Reagan and Iweighed in personally, making numerous calls to senators and congressmen.On December 9, I added a formal letter of opposition sayingthat the supplement appeared "to endorse and reward Israel'spolicies." Foreign Minister Shamir called President Reagan's opposition"an unfriendly act" and said that "it endangers the peaceprocess." The supplement sailed right by us and was approved byCongress as though President Reagan and I had not even been there.I was astonished and disheartened. This brought home to me vividlyIsrael's leverage in our Congress. I saw that I must work carefullywith the Israelis if I was to have any handle on congressional actionthat might affect Israel and if I was to maintain congressional supportfor my efforts to make progress in the Middle East.11 4

Yet Shultz and Reagan soon followed Congress's lead: the 1981 MOU onstrategic cooperation (suspended after Israel's annexation of the GolanHeights) was reinstated in November 1983, because key U.S. officials believedthat close cooperation with Israel was the only way to influence Israel'sbehavior.11 5

America's tendency to side with Israel extends to peace negotiations aswell. The United States played a key role in the abortive peace efforts thatfollowed the Six-Day War, as well as the talks that ended the War of Attritionin 1970. The United States agreed to consult with Israel before launchingfurther peace initiatives in 1972, and Kissinger was never able to bringmuch pressure to bear on Israel during his conduct of the "step-by-step"

diplomacy that followed the October War. Kissinger complained at onepoint during the negotiations, "I ask Rabin to make concessions, and he sayshe can't because Israel is weak. So I give him more arms, and then he sayshe doesn't need to make concessions because Israel is strong."11 6 As discussedabove, the disengagement agreements between Egypt and Israelwere produced primarily through pledges of additional U.S. aid and by anAmerican commitment to station civilian monitors in the Sinai.

The same pattern can be seen in the Clinton administration's handling ofthe negotiations that produced the 1993 Oslo Accords and the unsuccessfulattempt to reach a final status agreement in 1999-2000. There was occasionalfriction between Clinton administration officials and their Israelicounterparts, but the United

States coordinated its positions closely with Israeland generally backed Israel's approach to the peace process, even when

U.S. representatives had serious reservations about Israel's strategy.117 Accordingto one Israeli negotiator, Ron Pundak, a key representative in the negotiationsleading to Oslo and one of the architects of the subsequentframework agreement for the final status talks at Camp David in 2000, "Thetraditional approach of the [U.S.] State Department . . . was to adopt theposition of the Israeli Prime Minister. This was demonstrated most extremelyduring the Netanyahu government, when the American governmentseemed sometimes to be working for the Israeli Prime Minister, as it tried toconvince (and pressure) the Palestinian side to accept Israeli offers. ThisAmerican tendency was also evident during Barak's tenure."11 8U.S. participants in the peace process have offered similar judgments. Accordingto Robert Malley, special assistant for Arab-Israeli affairs under PresidentClinton and another key Camp David participant, "The [Israeli] ideasput forward at Camp David were never stated in writing . . . They generallywere presented as U.S. concepts, not Israeli ones." This practice underscoresthe degree to which the United States was providing Israel with diplomatichelp even when supposedly acting as a neutral mediator. U.S. negotiatorswere also constrained by the "no-surprise rule," which Malley describes as"the American commitment, if not to clear, at least to share in advance, eachof its ideas with Israel. Because Barak's strategy precluded early exposure ofhis bottom lines to anyone (the President included), he would invoke the no-surprise rule' to argue against US substantive proposals he felt went too far.The US ended up (often unwittingly) presenting Israeli negotiating positionsand couching them as rock-bottom red lines beyond which Israel could notgo."11 9 As Aaron David Miller, an adviser to six different secretaries of state on

Middle East and Arab-Israeli affairs and another key player in the Clinton ad

ministration's peace effort, put it during a 2005 postmortem on the failednegotiations:"Far too often, we functioned .. . as Israel's lawyer."120

CONCLUSION

Since Israel's founding in 1948, many important elements of America's MiddleEast policy have come to center around its commitment to the Jewishstate. As we shall discuss in detail in Part II, this tendency has become evenmore pronounced with the passage of time. To note one final sign of Israel'sprivileged position among U.S. allies: since 1976, six Israeli leaders haveaddressedjoint sessions of Congress, a higher total than for any other country.12 1 A trivial indicator, perhaps, but it is still striking given that these sixleaders represented a country whose 2007 population was less than that ofNew York City.

Yitzhak Rabin was right: America's generosity toward Israel is "beyondcompare in modern history." It has grown from modest beginnings to a "specialrelationship" that has no equal. As Mitchell Bard and Daniel Pipes putit, "From a comparative perspective, the United States and Israel may wellhave the most extraordinary tie in international politics."12 2

This support has accomplished one positive end: it has helped Israel prosper.For many people, that fact alone might justify all of the support that theUnited States has provided over the years. Given this record, it is no surprisethat a June 2003 Pew poll found that in twenty out of twenty-one countriessurveyed—including close U.S. allies like Britain, France, Canada, and Australia—either a majority or plurality of the population believes that U.S.Middle East policy "favors Israel too much." What is more surprising, perhaps,is that a plurality of Israelis (47 percent) agreed.12 3

Although the United States has derived a number of benefits from itssupport for Israel and from Israel's undeniable achievements, it has given farmore than it has gained. This generosity would be understandable if Israelwere a vital strategic asset for the United States—that is, if Israel's existenceand continued growth made the United States substantially safer. It wouldalso be easy to explain if

there were a compelling moral rationale for maintainingsuch high levels of material aid and diplomatic backing. But this isnot the case. In the next two chapters, we show that neither strategic interestsnor moral imperatives can explain why the United States continues togive Israel such generous and unconstrained support.

2

ISRAEL: STRATEGIC ASSET

OR LIABILITY?

America's willingness to give Israel extensive economic, military, and diplomaticsupport would be easy to understand if it advanced America's overallstrategic interests. Generous aid to Israel might be justified, for example, ifit were a cost-effective way for the United States to deal with countries thatWashington had previously identified as hostile. Steadfast U.S. supportmight also make sense if the United States received substantial benefits inreturn, and if the value of these benefits exceeded the economic and politicalcosts of U.S. support. If Israel possessed vital natural resources (such asoil or natural gas), or if it occupied a critical geographic location, then theUnited States might want to provide support in order to maintain good relationsand keep it out of unfriendly hands. In short, aid to Israel would beeasy to explain if it helped make Americans more secure or more prosperous.Israel's strategic value to the United States would be further enhancedif backing it won America additional friends around the world and did notundermine U.S. relations with other strategically important countries.

Not surprisingly, those who favor generous U.S. support for Israel routinelymake these sorts of arguments. In the 1980s, for example, scholarssuch as Steven Spiegel and A.F.K. Organski argued that Israel had become amajor strategic asset in the Cold War and claimed that generous U.S. aid wasa bargain given the benefits it produced for the United States.1 As HymanBookbinder, Washington representative of the American Jewish Committee,put it in 1984, "We bend over backward to help people understand that helpfor Israel is also in America's strategic interests."2 Today, the American IsraelPublic Affairs Committee, the most influential pro-Israel lobbying organization,declares that the United States and Israel have a "deep strategic partner

ship aimed at confronting the common threats to both nations" and says thatUnited States—Israel cooperation in defense and homeland security "hasproven to be of paramount and ever-increasing importance."3 The neoconservativeProject for the New American Century (PNAC) calls Israel "Americasstaunchest ally against international terrorism," and the Jewish Institute forNational Security Affairs (JINSA) says, "U.S.-Israel strategic cooperation is avital component in the global security equation for the United States."4 Accordingto Martin Kramer, a research fellow at Israel's Shalem Center and atthe Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), the United Statesbacks Israel not because of "Holocaust guilt or shared democratic values,"but because aid to Israel "underpins the pax Americana in the EasternMediterranean" and provides a "low-cost way of keeping order in part of theMiddle East."5 The Israeli strategist Efraim Inbar agrees, declaring that "thecase for the continued US support of Israel as an important strategic ally dueto its strategic location and political stability, as well as its technological andmilitary assets, is very strong."6

The strategic rationale for extensive U.S. support of the Jewish state portraysthis policy not as an act of charity or as a moral obligation, and certainlynot as a consequence of domestic lobbying.7 Instead, steadfast support forIsrael is said to be a reflection of America's overarching strategic interests:the United States backs Israel because doing so supposedly makes all Americanssafer.

In this chapter, we show that this view is at best outdated and at worstsimply wrong. Backing Israel may have yielded strategic benefits in the past,but the benefits have declined sharply in recent years while

the economicand diplomatic costs have increased. Instead of being a strategic asset, infact, Israel has become a strategic liability for the United States. Backing Israelso strongly is making Americans more vulnerable—not less—and makingit harder for the United States to achieve important and urgent foreignpolicy goals. Although there are compelling reasons for the United States tosupport Israel's existence and to remain committed to its survival, the currentlevel of U.S. support and its largely unconditional nature cannot be justifiedon strategic grounds.

We begin by evaluating Israel's role during the Cold War, because theclaim that Israel was a strategic asset is most convincing during this period.We then consider the argument that was invoked after the Soviet Union disappeared—specifically, the claim that support for Israel is justified by acommon threat from international terrorism and a set of hostile "rogue

states"—and we show that this claim does not provide a credible strategicrationale for unconditional U.S. support either.

HELPING CONTAIN THE SOVIET BEAR

When Israel was founded in 1948, U.S. policy makers did not consider it astrategic asset. The new state was regarded as weak and potentially vulnerable,and American policy makers recognized that embracing Israel tooclosely would undermine the U.S. position elsewhere in the Middle East.President Truman's decision to support the UN partition plan and to recognize

Israel was based not on strategic imperatives but on his genuine sympathyfor Jewish suffering, a certain religious conviction that permitting Jewsto return to their ancient homeland was desirable, and an awareness thatrecognition was strongly backed by many American Jews and would thereforeyield domestic political benefits.8 At the same time, several of Truman'skey advisers—including Secretary of State George Marshall and policyplanninghead George Kennan—opposed the decision because they believedit would jeopardize U.S. relations with the Arab world and facilitateSoviet penetration of the region. As Kennan noted in an internal memorandumin 1948, "Supporting the extreme objectives of political Zionism" wouldbe "to the detriment of overall U.S. security objectives" in the Middle East.Specifically, he argued it would increase opportunities for the Soviet Union,endanger oil concessions, and jeopardize U.S. basing rights in the region.9

This view had eroded by the early 1960s, and the Kennedy administrationconcluded that Israel deserved more support in light of growing Sovietaid to Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.1 0 Israeli leaders repeatedly emphasized theirpotential value as an ally, and their stunning victory in the Six-Day War in1967 strengthened these claims by offering a vivid demonstration of Israel'smilitary prowess. As discussed in the previous chapter, Nixon and Kissingersaw increased support for Israel as an effective way to counter Soviet influencethroughout the region.11 The image of Israel as a "strategic asset" tookroot in the 1970s and became an article of faith by the mid-1980s.

The case for Israel's strategic value from 1967 to 1989 is straightforward.By serving as America's proxy in the Middle East, Israel helped the UnitedStates contain Soviet expansion in that important region and occasionallyhelped the United States handle other regional crises.1 2 By inflicting humiliatingmilitary defeats on Soviet clients like Egypt and Syria in the 1967 Six

Day War and 1973 October War, Israel also damaged Moscow's reputationas an ally while enhancing U.S. prestige. This was a key element of Nixonand Kissinger's Cold War strategy: backing Israel to the hilt would make itimpossible for Egypt or Syria to regain the territory lost in 1967 and thusdemonstrate the limited value of Soviet support. This strategy bore fruit inthe 1970s, when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat severed ties with Moscowand realigned with the United

States, a breakthrough that paved the way tothe Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979. Israel's repeated victories alsoforced the Soviets to expend precious resources rearming their clients aftereach defeat, a task that the overstretched Soviet economy could ill afford.

By providing the United States with intelligence about Soviet capabilities,Soviet client states, and the Middle East more generally, Israel also facilitatedthe broader American campaign against the Soviet Union. In 1956, for example,an Israeli spy obtained a copy of Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev's"secret speech" denouncing Stalin, which Israel promptly passed on to theUnited States. In the 1960s, Israel gave U.S. defense experts access to a SovietMiG-21 aircraft obtained from an Iraqi defector and provided similar accessto Soviet equipment captured in the 1967 and 1973 wars.13 Finally, theUnited States benefited from access to Israeli training facilities, advancedtechnology developed by Israeli defense companies, and consultations withIsraeli experts on counterterrorism and other security problems.

This justification for supporting Israel is factually correct, and Israel maywell have been a net strategic asset during this period. Yet the case is not asopen and shut as Israel's advocates maintain and was questioned by some

U.S. experts at the time.1 4 Why? Because in addition to the direct economicburden, the growing partnership with Israel imposed significant costs on theUnited States, and because Israel's capacity to help its vastly more powerfulpartner was inherently limited.First, although Israel's military did help check Soviet client states likeEgypt, Syria, and Iraq, America's commitment to Israel played a significantrole in pushing those states into Moscow's arms in the first place. Egypt andSyria had been engaged in a bitter conflict with Israel since the late 1940s,and they were unable to get help from Washington despite several requests.American support for Israel was nowhere near as generous as it is today, but

the United States was still committed to Israel's survival and was not going todo anything to undermine its security—in particular, the United States wasunwilling to provide either Egypt or Syria with weapons that might be usedagainst the Jewish state. As a result, when an Israeli attack on an Egyptianarmy base in Gaza in February 1955 killed thirty-seven Egyptian soldiers and

wounded another thirty-one, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser wasforced to turn to the Soviet Union for arms instead. Nasser repeatedly referredto the Gaza raid as a "turning point," precipitating the first major Arabarms deal with Moscow, which made the Soviet Union a major player in MiddleEast affairs virtually overnight. The raid also led Nasser to shut down asecret negotiating channel with the Israeli government and to shift frommodest efforts to limit Arab infiltration to active support for it.1 5 Given theircontinuing conflict with Israel and America's reluctance to provide them witharms, Israel's main Arab adversaries had little choice but to seek help fromthe Soviets, despite their own misgivings about moving closer to Moscow.1 6

Second, although U.S. support for Israel put more pressure on the SovietUnion, it also fueled the Arab-Israeli conflict and inhibited progress towarda settlement, a result that continues to haunt both Israel and the UnitedStates. The Nixon/Kissinger strategy eventually succeeded in pulling Egyptout of the Soviet orbit, but the tendency to view Middle East issues primarilythrough the prism of the Cold War (and thus to back Israel no matterwhat) also led the United States to overlook several promising opportunitiesfor peace, most notably Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's repeated signalsthat he was prepared to cut a deal in 1971-72.1 7 Speaking to a private groupin 1975, Kissinger recalled that Secretary of State William Rogers's efforts toreach an interim agreement in 1971 had broken down "over whether or not1,000 Egyptian soldiers would be permitted across the Canal. That agreementwould have prevented the 1973 War. I must say now that I am sorrythat I did not support the Rogers effort more than I did."1 8

Third, the expansion and deepening of U.S.-Israeli relations in the 1960sand 1970s also contributed to the rise of anti-Americanism across the Araband Islamic world. "At the time of World War I," notes the Rice Universityhistorian Ussama Makdisi, "the image of the United States in the Arabprovinces of the Ottoman Empire was generally

positive; those Arabs whoknew of the country saw it as a great power that was not imperialist asBritain, France, and Russia were."1 9 Even after Israel was founded, Arab resentmentwas limited by U.S. efforts to play an evenhanded role in the MiddleEast and by the fact that France, not the United States, was Israel's mainarms supplier until 1967. What conflicts there were with "progressive" Arabstates such as Nasser's Egypt partly reflected disagreements about Israel butalso stemmed from U.S. support for conservative Middle Eastern monarchies(the shah of Iran, King Hussein of Jordan, the House of Saud), whowere all deeply hostile to Nasser as well. Unfortunately for the UnitedStates, its support for these regimes (which Washington saw as "moderate"

and its opponents deemed "reactionary") and for Israel fueled a growing tendencyfor many Arabs to see it as the heir to Britain's former imperial role.2 0

Arab animosity increased as U.S. support for Israel grew and was compoundedby Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Sinai, Gaza, and theGolan Heights in 1967 and by its subsequent repression of the PalestinianArabs living in what came to be known as the Occupied Territories. Duringthe Cold War, this situation made some Middle Eastern regimes more interestedin close ties with the Soviet Union and further reduced U.S. influence.It also contributed to the rise of Arab and Islamic extremism, as someprescient analysts had predicted two decades ago. Writing in 1985-86, forexample, Harry Shaw, former head of the Office of Management and Budget'sMilitary Assistance Branch, warned that "Israel's settlement policy on theWest Bank is at cross-purposes with U.S. interests and contrary to U.S. policy.The lack of progress toward a peace settlement—for which Israel and itsArab neighbors share responsibility—undercuts Arabs who are willing tolive in peace and strengthens the influence of Islamic fundamentalists and

other Arabs who have no interest in the kind of stable Middle East thatwould be compatible with U.S. interests and Israel's security."21 America'srelations with the Arab and Islamic world would hardly have been perfectwere Israel not a U.S. ally, but a more evenhanded approach would havesmoothed one important source of friction. This basic fact was not lost on theIsraeli military leader and politician Moshe Dayan, whose memoirs containa revealing account of a talk he had with Kissinger at the time of the 1973October War. "Though I happened to remark that the United States was theonly country that was ready to stand by us," wrote Dayan, "my silent reflectionwas that the United States would really rather support the Arabs."2 2

Support for Israel imposed additional costs on the United States, such asthe Arab oil embargo and production decrease during the October War. Thedecision to use the "oil weapon" was a direct response to Nixon's decision toprovide Israel with $2.2 billion of emergency military assistance during thewar, and it ultimately did significant damage to the U.S. economy. The embargoand production decrease cost the United States some $48.5 billion in1974 alone (equal to roughly $140 billion in 2000 dollars), due to higher petroleumcosts and an estimated 2 percent reduction in GDP. The oil crisisalso led to serious strains in America's relations with key allies in Europe andAsia.2 3 Helping Israel defeat two Soviet clients may have been a positivedevelopmentin terms of America's broader Cold War concerns, but the UnitedStates paid a high price for the victory.

Israel's other Cold War contributions were useful, but their strategic

value should not be overstated. Israel did indeed provide the United Stateswith helpful intelligence, for instance, but there is no evidence that Jerusalemgave Washington information that decisively altered the course ofthe superpower competition or enabled America to inflict a decisive blowagainst its Communist adversary. The primary benefit seems to have beenaccess to captured Soviet weapons and to data regarding their battlefieldperformance, as well as debriefings from Soviet Jews who had immigrated toIsrael. The United States used this information to help develop weaponsand tactics that would have been valuable had the superpowers ever cometo blows, and this information has undoubtedly helped the United States whenit has fought former Soviet clients such as Iraq. But Iraq was a third-ratemilitary power and the United States scarcely needed much help

to defeatSaddam in 1991 or to oust him in 2003. Access to Israeli training facilitiesand consultations with Israeli experts were also useful and appreciated, butthese arrangements were never essential to the development of Americanmilitary power or to its ultimate triumph over the Soviet Union.

In fact, Israeli "assistance" was sometimes of dubious value. One formerCIA official reports being "appalled at the lack of quality of the [Israeli]politicalintelligence on the Arab world . . . Their tactical military intelligencewas first-rate. But they didn't know their enemy. I saw this political intelligenceand it was lousy, laughably bad .. . It was gossip stuff mostly."24 Israelalso provided the United States with faulty or misleading intelligence onseveral occasions, probably in order to encourage the United States to takeactions that Israel wanted. Prior to the Six-Day War, for example, Israeliintelligenceassessments painted a grim and frightening picture of Egyptiancapabilities and intentions, which American intelligence officials believedwas both incorrect and politically motivated. As National Security Adviser

W. W. Rostow told President Johnson, "We do not believe that the Israeliappreciationpresented . . . was a serious estimate of the sort they would submitto their own high officials. We think it is probably a gambit intended toinfluence the US to do one or more of the following: (a) provide militarysupplies, (b) make more public commitments to Israel, (c) approve Israelimilitary initiatives, and (d) put more pressure on Nasser."2 5 As we discuss ingreater detail in Chapter 8, Israel also supplied the United States withalarmist reports about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs prior tothe 2003 invasion, thereby contributing to U.S. miscalculations about the

actual danger that Saddam Hussein presented.2 6Nor has Israel been a reliable proxy safeguarding other U.S. interests inthe region. When Martin Kramer claims that "American support for Is

rael . . . underpins the pax Americana in the Eastern Mediterranean" and hasbeen a "low cost way of keeping order in part of the Middle East," he bothexaggeratesthe benefits of this relationship and understates the costs.2 7 Stabilityin the eastern Mediterranean is desirable, but the region is not a vital U.S.strategic interest, in sharp contrast to the oil-rich Persian Gulf. And if Israel'sstrategic value derives from its role enforcing the "pax Americana" in thisregion, then it has not been doing a particularly good job. Its invasion ofLebanon in 1982 made the region less stable and led directly to the formationof Hezbollah, the militant group that many believe is responsible for thedevastatingattacks on the U.S. embassy and marine barracks that cost more than250 American lives. The suicide bombers are to blame for these deaths, butthe loss of life was part of the price the United States had to pay in order toclean up the situation that Israel had created. Israel's prolonged campaign tocolonize the West Bank and Gaza (indirectly subsidized by U.S. aid and undertakenin part with U.S.-made weapons) has also produced two major uprisingsin which thousands of Palestinians and Israelis have been killed. Thus,Kramer seriously overstates Israel's value as a low-cost "regional stabilizer."

Israel's limited strategic value is further underscored by its inability tocontribute to an undeniable U.S. interest: access to Persian Gulf oil. DespiteIsrael's vaunted military prowess, the United States could not count on itshelp during the Cold War to deter a direct Soviet assault on Western oil suppliesor to protect them in the event of a regional war. As Harry Shaw notedin the mid-1980s, "Some Israeli officials explicitly reject Israeli engagementof Soviet ground forces beyond their country's immediate defense . . . TheseIsraelis acknowledge as far-fetched the notion that Israeli divisions wouldadvance beyond Israel's borders to meet a Soviet thrust toward the PersianGulf."2 8 According to a former Pentagon official, "Israel's strategic value tothe United States was always grotesquely exaggerated. When we were draftingcontingency plans for the Middle East in the 1980s, we found that the Israeliswere of little value to us in 95 percent of the cases."2 9

As a result, when the shah of Iran fell in 1979, raising concerns about apossible Soviet invasion, the United States had to create its

own Rapid DeploymentForce (RDF) to counter that threat and arrange for basing rightsand preposition war matériel in various Arab countries. The Pentagon couldnot count on Israel to deter the Soviet Union by itself and could not use Israelas a forward base—Israeli offers notwithstanding—because doing sowould have caused political problems in the Arab world and made it evenharder to keep the Soviets out of the region. As Shaw remarked in 1986,"The notion of using Israel as a platform for projecting U.S. forces into Arab

states .. . is not widely supported outside Israel. Arab analysts argue that anArab regime that accepted American help funneled through Israel would bediscredited with its own people and therefore would be more likely tofall . . . U.S. officials also are skeptical of the feasibility of using Israelibases. The Israeli offers may be designed primarily to entice the UnitedStates into closer relations and to enhance the rationale for more U.S. aidwithout requirements for spécifie Israeli commitments."3 0 Israel's limitedcapacity to help in the Gulf was revealed in the late 1980s, when the Iran-Iraq War jeopardized the safety of oil shipments in the Persian Gulf. TheUnited States and several of its European allies reinforced their naval forcesin the region, began escorting oil tankers, and eventually attacked someIranian patrol boats, but Israel had no part to play in these operations.3 1

Ultimately, although a limited case can be made for Israel's strategicvalue during the Cold War, it does not fully explain why the United Statesprovided it with so much economic, military, and diplomatic support. It is

easy to understand why the United States devoted billions to defending itsNATO allies—Europe was a key center of industrial power that had to bekept out of Soviet hands—and equally easy to grasp the strategic motivationbehind U.S. support for oil-rich countries like Saudi Arabia, despite sharplycontrasting political values. In Israel's case, however, this sort of obviousstrategic imperative was never as clear. Henry Kissinger may have used U.S.aid to Israel as a way to drive a wedge between Moscow and Cairo, but headmitted privately that "Israeli strength does not prevent the spread of communismin the Arab world .. . So it is difficult to claim that a strong Israelserves American interests because it prevents the spread of communism inthe Arab world. It does not. It provides for the survival of Israel."3 2 RonaldReagan may have called Israel a "strategic asset" when he was campaigningfor president in 1980, but he did not mention Israel's strategic value in hismemoirs and referred instead to various moral considerations to explain hissupport for the Jewish state.3 3

Thoughtful Israeli analysts have long recognized this basic reality. As theIsraeli strategic expert Shai Feldman, former head of Tel Aviv University'sJaffe Center for Strategic Studies, noted in his own study of U.S.-Israelisecurity cooperation, "The strategic dimension of America's motivationfor supporting Israel never comprised the core of these relations. Rather,this dimension received growing emphasis in the 1980s as Israel's Americansupporters sought to base U.S.-Israel relations on grounds that would bemore appealing to Republican administrations. Yet, the significance of U.S.Israelstrategic cooperation and the extent to which Israel is perceived as a

strategic asset to the United States never approached that of the other elementsin the U.S.-Israel relationship." Those "other elements," according toFeldman, were post-Holocaust sympathy, shared political values, Israel'sunderdog image, common cultural linkages, and "the role of the Jewish communityin American politics."3 4

FROM THE COLD WAR TO 9/11

Even if Israel was a valuable ally during the Cold War, that justification endedwhen the Soviet Union collapsed. According to the Middle East historianBernard Lewis (himself a prominent supporter of Israel), "Whatever value Israelmight have had as a strategic asset during the Cold War, that value obviouslyended when the Cold War itself came to a close." The political scientistBernard Reich of George

Washington University, the author of several bookson U.S.-Israeli relations, drew a similar conclusion in 1995, noting that "Israelis of limited military or economic importance to the United States .. . It is nota strategically vital state." The Brandeis University defense expert Robert Artmade the same point in 2003, noting that "Israel has little strategic value tothe United States and is in many ways a strategic liability."35 As the Cold Warreceded into history, Israel's declining strategic value became hard to miss.

In fact, the Gulf War in 1991 provided evidence that Israel was becominga strategic burden. The United States and its allies eventually assembledmore than four hundred thousand troops to liberate Kuwait, but they couldnot use Israeli bases or allow the IDF to participate without jeopardizing thefragile coalition against Iraq. And when Saddam fired Scud missiles into Israelin the hope of provoking an Israeli response that would fracture thecoalition, Washington had to divert resources (such as Patriot missile batteries)to defend Israel and to keep it on the sidelines. Israel was not to blamefor this situation, of course, but it illustrates the extent to which it wasbecominga liability rather than an asset. As William Waldegrave, minister ofstate in the British Foreign Office, told the House of Commons, the UnitedStates might now be learning that a strategic alliance with Israel "was notparticularly useful if it cannot be used in a crisis such as this." This pointwas not lost on Bernard Lewis, either, who wrote, "The change [in Israel'sstrategic value] was clearly manifested in the Gulf War . . . when what theUnited States most desired from Israel was to keep out of the conflict—tobe silent, inactive, and, as far as possible, invisible . . . Israel was not anasset,but an irrelevance—some even said a nuisance."3 6

ISRAEL: STRATEGIC ASSET OR LIABILITY?

One might think that the shared threat from international terrorism provideda powerful rationale for United States-Israel cooperation in the immediateaftermath of the Cold War, but this is not the case. The Oslo peaceprocess was under way during most of the 1990s, and Palestinian terroristattacks against Israel were declining, from 67 killed and 167 injured in 1994to only 1 dead and only 12 injured in 2000. (Israeli casualties rose again afterOslo collapsed, with 110 Israelis killed and 918 injured in 2001 and 320killed and 1,498 injured in 2002.)3 7 U.S. policy makers were becoming moreconcerned about Islamic terrorism—including al Qaeda—especially afterthe failed attempt to blow up the World Trade Center in 1993, the attackson the Khobar Towers housing complex in Saudi Arabia in 1996, the bombingof American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and the attackon the USS Cole in Yemen in 1999. A number of new initiatives to deal withthe problem were under way, but terrorism was still not widely perceived asa mortal threat and the U.S. "global war on terror" did not begin in earnestuntil after September 11, 2001. 3 8

Similarly, although both Israel and the United States were worried about"rogue states" such as Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Syria during this period, thesestates were too weak to pose a serious threat to the United States itself.Consider that the combined population of these four states in 2000 was lessthan 40 percent of Americas; their combined GDP was barely more than5 percent of U.S. GDP, and their combined military spending equaled ascant 3 percent of the U.S. defense budget.3 9 Iraq was subject to a punishingUN embargo, weapons inspectors were busy dismantling its WMD programs,and Iran's own WM D efforts were not far advanced. Syria, Iran, andIraq were often at odds with each other, which made containing these stateseven easier and reduced the need to try to overthrow them.

Instead, the United States adopted a policy of "dual containment" towardIran and Iraq and made a serious but unsuccessful attempt to brokera final peace treaty between Syria and Israel.4 0 It also engaged in a protractedand ultimately successful effort to persuade Libya to give up itsWMD programs and compensate the families of the victims of the Pan AmFlight 103 bombing, a campaign waged through economic sanctions and patientmultilateral diplomacy.41 Israel's capabilities were not needed to accomplishthese objectives, because the United States could deal with thesestates by itself.

In other words, Israel was not seen as a prized ally because U.S. policymakers believed its help was essential for dealing with these so-called roguestates. Rather, Washington worried about these states in good part because

it was already committed to protecting Israel. With respect to Iran, for example,the main points of contention between Tehran and Washington wereIran's opposition to the Camp David peace process, its support for Hezbollah,and its efforts to develop WMD. The importance of these issues wasmagnified substantially by the existing U.S. relationship with Israel.4 2 Washingtondid have interests in the region that were unrelated to Israel, ofcourse—such as its desire to prevent any single state from dominating theGulf and thereby ensure access to oil—and its pursuit of these interestsoccasionallyled to friction with some states in the region. In particular, theUnited States would have undoubtedly opposed Iran's WM D efforts even ifIsrael had never existed. But the U.S. commitment to Israel made these issuesseem even more urgent, without making them easier to address.

Until September 11, 2001, the danger from terrorism and problemsposed by these various rogue states did not provide a compelling strategic rationalefor unconditional U.S. support of the Jewish state. These concernsexplain why Israel wanted help from the United States but cannot accountfor America's willingness to provide that help as generously as it did.

"PARTNERS AGAINST TERROR": THE NEW RATIONALE

In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, the main strategicjustificationbehind U.S. support for Israel became the claim that the two stateswere now "partners against terror." This new rationale depicts the UnitedStates and Israel as threatened by the same terrorist groups and by a set ofrogue states that back these groups and seek to acquire WMD. Their hostilityto Israel and the United States is said to be due to a fundamental antipathyto the West's Judeo-Christian values, its culture, and its democraticinstitutions. In other words, they hate Americans for "what we are," not for"what we do." In the same way, they hate Israel because it is also Western,modern, and democratic, and not because it has occupied Arab land, includingimportant Islamic holy sites, and oppressed an Arab population.

The implications of the new rationale are obvious: support for Israel playsno role in America's terrorism problem or the growing anti-Americanism inthe Arab and Islamic world, and ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ormaking U.S. support for Israel more selective or conditional would not help.Washington should therefore give Israel a free hand in dealing with thePalestinians and groups like Hezbollah. In addition, Washington should notpress Israel to make concessions (such as dismantling settlements in the

Occupied Territories) until all Palestinian terrorists are imprisoned, repentant,or dead. Instead, the United States should continue to provide Israelwith extensive support and use its own power and resources to go aftercountries like the Islamic Republic of Iran, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Basharal-Assad's Syria, and other countries believed to be supporting terrorists.

Instead of seeing Israel as a major source of America's troubled relationshipwith the Arab and Islamic world, this new rationale portrays Israel as akey ally in the global "war on terror." Why? Because its enemies are said tobe America's enemies. As Ariel Sharon put it during a visit to the UnitedStates in late 2001, after the horrific attacks on the World Trade Center andPentagon: "You in America are in a war against terror. We in Israel are in awar against terror. It's the same war." According to a senior official in the firstBush administration, "Sharon played the president like a violin: Tm fightingyour war, terrorism is terrorism' and so on."4 3 Former Prime Minister BenjaminNetanyahu told the U.S. Senate in 2002, "If we do not immediatelyshut down the terror factories where Arafat is

producing human bombs, it isonly a matter of time before suicide bombers will terrorize your cities. If notdestroyed, this madness will strike in your buses, in your supermarkets, inyour pizza parlors, in your cafes." Netanyahu also published an op-ed in theChicago Sun-Times declaring, "No grievance, real or imagined, can ever justifyterror . . . American power topples the Taliban regime in Afghanistan,and the al-Qaida network there crumbles on its own. The United Statesmust now act similarly against the other terror regimes—Iran, Iraq, YasserArafat's dictatorship, Syria, and a few others."4 4 His successor, Ehud Barak,repeated this theme in an op-ed in the Times of London, declaring, "Theworld's governments know exactly who the terrorists are and exactly whichrogue states support and promote their activity. Countries like Iran, Iraq,Libya, Sudan and North Korea have a proven track-record of sponsoring terrorism,while no one needs reminding of the carnage wrought by the terroristthugs of Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, and even Yassir Arafat's ownPLO."4 5 Prime Minister Ehud Olmert struck the same note in his own addressto Congress in 2006, declaring, "Our countries do not just share theexperience and pain of terrorism. We share the commitment and resolve toconfront the brutal terrorists that took these innocent people from us."4 6

Israel's American supporters offer essentially the same justification. InOctober 2001, WINEP's executive director, Robert Satloff, explained whythe United States should continue to back Israel after September 11 : "Theanswer should be clear, given the democratic values we share and the commonenemies we face . . . No country has suffered more from the same sort

of terrorism that hit the World Trade Center and the Pentagon than Israel."4 7 Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) declared in December 2001 that

"the PLO is the same as the Taliban, which aids, abets and provides safehaven for terrorists. And Israel is like America, simply trying to protect itshomefront . . . Arafat is to Israel as Mullah Mohammed [Omar] is to America."4 8 In April and May 2002, Congress passed by overwhelming margins(352-21 in the House, 94-2 in the Senate) two nearly identical resolutionsdeclaring that "the United States and Israel are now engaged in a commonstruggle against terrorism."49 The officiai theme of the 2002 AIPAC annualconference was "America and Israel Standing Against Terror," and the conferencepresentations emphasized the shared threat from Yasser Arafat,Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran,and Syria.5 0 PNAC made the same point in an open letter to President Bushin April 2002, signed by William Kristol, Richard Perle, William Bennett,Daniel Pipes, James Woolsey, Eliot Cohen, Norman Podhoretz, and twentyeightothers, most of them prominent neoconservatives. It declared, "Noone should doubt that the United States and Israel share a common enemyWe are both targets of what you [Bush] have correctly called an 'Axis ofEvil' .. . As Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has pointed out, Iran, Iraq, andSyria are all engaged in 'inspiring and financing a culture of political murderand suicide bombing' against Israel, just as they have aided campaigns of terrorismagainst the United States . . . You have declared war on internationalterrorism, Mr. President. Israel is fighting the same war."51

This new justification has a certain prima facie plausibility, and it is notsurprising that many Americans equate what happened on September 11with attacks on Israelis. Upon further inspection, however, the "partnersagainst terror" rationale unravels almost completely, especially as a justificationfor unconditional U.S. support. Viewed objectively, Israel is a liability inboth the "war on terror" and in the broader effort to deal with so-called roguestates.

To begin with, the new strategic rationale depicts "terrorism" as a single,unified phenomenon, thereby suggesting that Palestinian suicide bombersare as much a threat to the United States as they are to Israel itself, and thatthe terrorists who attacked America on September 11 are part of a wellorganizedglobal movement that is also targeting Israel. But this claim restson a fundamental misconception of what terrorism is. Terrorism is not anorganizationor a movement or even an "enemy" that one can declare war on;terrorism is simply the tactic of indiscriminately attacking enemy targets—especially civilians —in order to sow fear, undermine morale, and provoke

counterproductive reactions from one's adversary. It is a tactic that many differentgroups sometimes employ, usually when they are much weaker thantheir adversaries and have no other good option for fighting against superiormilitary forces. Zionists used terrorism when they were trying to drive theBritish out of Palestine and establish their own state—for example, bybombing the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946 and assassinating UNmediator Folke Bernadotte in 1948, among other acts—and the UnitedStates has backed a number of "terrorist" organizations in the past (includingthe Nicaraguan contras and the UNITA guerrillas in Angola). Americanpresidents have also welcomed a number of former terrorists to the WhiteHouse (including PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, and Israeli Prime MinistersMenachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, who played key roles in the mainZionist terror organizations), which merely underscores the fact that terrorismis a tactic and not a unified movement. Clarifying this issue in no wayjustifies attacks on innocent people—which is always morally reprehensible—but it reminds us that groups that employ this method of struggle donot always threaten vital U.S. interests and that the United States has sometimesactively supported such groups.

In contrast to al Qaeda, in fact, the terrorist organizations that threaten Israel(such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah) do not attack the UnitedStates and do not pose a mortal threat to America's core security interests.With respect to Hezbollah, for example, the Hebrew University historianMoshe Maoz observes that it "is mostly a threat against Israel. They did attackU.S. targets when there were American troops in Lebanon, but they killedto oust foreign forces from Lebanon. I doubt very much whether Hezbollahwill go out of its way to attack America." The Middle East expert Patrick

Seale agrees: "Hezbollah is a purely local phenomenon directed purely at theIsraelis," and the terrorism experts Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon echothis view with respect to Hamas, noting, "Thus far, Hamas has not targetedAmericans."5 2 We may believe that all terrorist acts are morally wrong, butfrom the perspective of U.S. strategic interests, not all terrorists are alike.

There is no convincing evidence linking Osama bin Laden and his innercircle to the various Palestinian terrorist groups, and most Palestinian terroristsdo not share al Qaeda's desire to launch a global Islamic restoration or restorethe caliphate. In fact, the PLO was secular and nationalist—notIslamist—and it is only in the last decade or so, as the occupation has groundon, that many Palestinians have become more attracted to Islamist ideas. Norare their activities—however heinous and deplorable—simply random violencedirected against Israel or the West. Instead, Palestinian terrorism has

always been directed solely at their perceived grievances against Israel, beginningwith resistance to the original Zionist influx and continuing after theexpulsion of much of the Palestinian population in the 1948 war. Today,these actions are largely a response to Israel's prolonged campaign to colonizethe West Bank and Gaza Strip and a reflection of the Palestinians' own weakness.These territories contained few Jews when Israel captured them in1967, but Israel spent the next forty years colonizing them with settlements,road networks, and military bases, while brutally suppressing Palestinian attemptsto resist these encroachments.5 3 Not surprisingly, Palestinian resistancehas frequently employed terrorism, which is usually how subjectpopulations strike back at powerful occupiers.5 4 And while groups likeHamas have yet to publicly accept Israel's existence, we should not forgetthat Yasser Arafat and the rest of the PLO did, and that Palestinian PresidentMahmoud Abbas has reiterated that commitment on numerous occasions.

More important, claiming that Israel and the United States are united bya shared terrorist threat has the causal relationship backward. The UnitedStates did not form an alliance with Israel because it suddenly realized thatit faced a serious danger from "global terrorism" and urgently needed Israel'shelp to defeat it. In fact, the United States has a terrorism problem in goodpart because it has long been so supportive of Israel. It is hardly headlinenews to observe that U.S. backing for Israel is unpopular elsewhere in theMiddle East—that has been true for several decades—but many peoplemay not realize how much America's one-sided policies have cost it overthe years. Not

only have these policies helped inspire al Qaeda, but theyhave also facilitated its recruitment efforts and contributed to growing anti-Americanism throughout the region.

Of course, those who believe that Israel is still a valuable strategic asset oftendeny that there was any connection between U.S. support for Israel andthe terrorism problem, and especially not the September 11 attacks. Theyclaim that Osama bin Laden seized on the plight of the Palestinians only recently,and only because he realized it was good for recruiting purposes. Thus,WINEP's Robert Satloff claims that bin Laden's identification with Palestineis "a recent—and almost surely opportunistic—phenomenon," and Alan Dershowitzdeclares, "Prior to September 11, Israel was barely on bin Laden'sradar screen." Dennis Ross suggests that bin Laden was merely "trying to gainlegitimacy by implying that his attack on America was about the plight of thePalestinians," and Martin Kramer says he knows of no "unbiased terrorism expert"who believes that "American support for Israel is the source of popularresentment, propelling recruits to al Qaeda." The former Commentary editor

Norman Podhoretz likewise argues that "if Israel had never come into existence,or if it were magically to disappear, the United States would still standas an embodiment of everything that most of these Arabs consider evil."55

It is not surprising that some of Israel's defenders offer such claims, becauseacknowledging that U.S. support for Israel has fueled anti-Americanterrorism and encouraged growing anti-Americanism would require them toadmit that unconditional support for Israel does in fact impose significant

costs on the United States. Such an admission would cast doubt on Israel'snet strategic value and imply that Washington should make its support conditionalon Israel adopting a different approach toward the Palestinians.

Contrary to these claims, there is in fact abundant evidence that U.S.support for Israel encourages anti-Americanism throughout the Arab and Islamicworld and has fueled the rage of anti-American terrorists. It is nottheir only grievance, of course, but it is a central one.5 6 While some Islamicradicals are genuinely upset by what they regard as the West's materialismand venality, its alleged "theft" of Arab oil, its support for corrupt Arabmonarchies, its repeated military interventions in the region, etc., they arealso angered by U.S. support for Israel and Israel's harsh treatment of thePalestinians. Thus, Sayyid Qutb, the Egyptian dissident whose writings havebeen an important inspiration for contemporary Islamic fundamentalists,was hostile to the United States both because he saw it as a corrupt and licentioussociety and also because of U.S. support for Israel.5 7 Or as SayyidMuhammed Husayn Fadlallah, spiritual leader of Hezbollah, put it in 2002,"I believe that America bears responsibility for all of Israel, both in itsoccupationof the lands of [19]48 or in all its settlement policies [in the lands occupiedsince 1967], despite the occasional utterance of a few timid andembarrassed words which disapprove of the settlements . . . America is ahypocritical nation .. . for it gives solid support and lethal weapons to theIsraelis, but gives the Arabs and the Palestinians [only] words."58 One neednot agree with such sentiments to recognize the potency of these argumentsin the minds of many Arabs and to realize how unquestioned support for Israelhas fueled anger and resentment against the United States.

An even clearer demonstration of the connection between U.S. support forIsrael and anti-American terrorism is the case of Ramzi Yousef, who mastermindedthe first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993 and is now servinga life sentence in a U.S. prison. Not only did Yousef mail letters to several NewYork newspapers, taking credit for the attack and demanding that the UnitedStates terminate aid to Israel, he also told the agents who flew him back to theUnited States following his arrest in Pakistan in 1995 that he felt guilty about

causing U.S. deaths. But as Steve Coll recounts in his prizewinning bookGhost Wars, Yousef's remorse was "overridden by the strength of his desire tostop the killing of Arabs by Israeli troops"

and by his belief that "bombingAmerican targets was the only way to cause change.'" Yousef reportedly alsosaid that "he truly believed his actions had been rational and logical in pursuitof a change in U.S. policy toward Israel." According to Coll, Yousef "mentionedno other motivation during the flight and no other issue in Americanforeign policy that concerned him." Further corroboration comes fromYousef's associate Abdul Rahman Yasin, who told the CBS news correspondentLesley Stahl that Yousef had recruited him by telling him that acts of terrorismwould be "revenge for my Palestinian brothers and my brothers inSaudi Arabia," adding that Yousef "talked to me a lot about this."5 9

Or consider the most obvious case: Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda.Contrary to the declarations of Satloff, Dershowitz, Kramer, and others,considerable evidence confirms that bin Laden has been deeply sympatheticto the Palestinian cause ever since he was a young man and that he has longbeen angry at the United States for backing Israel so strongly. According toMichael Scheuer, who directed the CIA's intelligence unit on al Qaeda andits founder, the young bin Laden was for the most part gentle and well behaved,but "an exception to Osama's well-mannered, nonconfrontational demeanorwas his support for the Palestinians and negative attitude towardsthe United States and Israel."6 0 After September 11, bin Laden's mothertold an interviewer that "in his teenage years he was the same nice kid . . .but he was more concerned, sad, and frustrated about the situation in Palestinein particular, and the Arab and Muslim world in general."6 1

Moreover, bin Laden's first public statement intended for a wider audience—released December 29, 1994—directly addressed the Palestinian issue.As Bruce Lawrence, compiler of bin Laden's public statements,explains, "The letter makes it plain that Palestine, far from being a late additionto bin Laden's agenda, was at the centre of it from the start."62

Bin Laden also condemned the United States on several occasions priorto September 11 for its support of Israel against the Palestinians and calledfor jihad against America on this basis. According to Benjamin and Simon,the "most prominent grievance" in bin Laden's 1996 fatwa (titled "Declarationof War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two HolyPlaces") is "bin Laden's hallmark: the 'Zionist-Crusader alliance.'" BinLaden refers explicitly to Muslim blood being spilled "in Palestine and Iraq"and blames it all on the "American-Israeli conspiracy."63 When the CNN reporterPeter Arnett asked him in March 1997 why he had declared jihad

against the United States, bin Laden replied, "We declared jihad against theUS government, because the US government is unjust, criminal, and tyrannical.It has committed acts that are extremely unjust, hideous, and criminal,whether directly or through its support of the Israeli occupation of theLand of the Prophet's Night Journey [Palestine]. And we believe the US isdirectly responsible for those who were killed in Palestine, Lebanon, andIraq."64 These comments are hardly anomalous. As Max Rodenbeck, Mideastcorrespondent for the Economist, writes in a prominent review of twoimportant books about bin Laden, "Of all these themes, the notion of paybackfor injustices suffered by the Palestinians is perhaps the most powerfullyrecurrent in bin Laden's speeches."6 5

The 9/11 Commission confirmed that bin Laden and other key al Qaedamembers were motivated both by Israel's behavior toward the Palestiniansand by U.S. support for Israel. A background study by the commission's staffnotes that bin Laden tried to accelerate the date of the attack in the fall of2000, after Israeli opposition party leader Ariel Sharon's provocative visit(accompaniedby hundreds of Israeli riot police) to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem,the site of al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the three holiest sites in Islam.According to the staff statement, "although bin Laden recognized that [Mohamed]Atta and the other pilots had only just arrived in the United States tobegin their flight training, the al Qaeda leader wanted to punish the UnitedStates for supporting Israel."66 The following year, "when bin Laden learnedfrom the media that Sharon would be visiting the White House in June orJuly 2001, he attempted once more to accelerate the operation."67 In additionto informing the timing of the 9/11 attacks, bin Laden's anger at the UnitedStates for backing Israel had implications for his preferred choice of targets.In the first meeting between Atta, the mission leader, and bin Laden in late1999, the

initial plans called for hitting the U.S. Capitol because it was "theperceived source of U.S. policy in support of Israel."68 In short, bin Ladenand his deputies clearly see the issue of Palestine as central to their agenda.

The 9/11 Commission also notes that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed —whom it described as "the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks"— was primarilymotivated by the Palestinian issue. In the commission's words, "Byhis own account, KSM's animus toward the United States stemmed notfrom his experiences there as a student, but rather from his violent disagreementwith U.S. foreign policy favoring Israel."6 9 It is hard to imagine morecompelling evidence of the role that U.S. support for Israel played in inspiringthe 9/11 attacks.

Even if bin Laden himself were not personally engaged by the Palestinian

issue, it still provides him with an effective recruiting tool. Arab and Islamicanger has grown markedly since the end of the Cold War, and especiallysince the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, in part because the levelof violence directed against the Palestinians has been both significantlygreater and more visible.70 The First Intifada (1987-92) was much less violent,and there was relative calm in the Occupied Territories during the Osloyears (1993-2000). The development of the Internet and the emergence ofalternative media outlets such as Al Jazeerah now provide round-the-clockcoverage of the carnage. Not only is Israel inflicting more violence upon itsPalestinian subjects, but Arabs and Muslims around the world can see it with

their own eyes. And they can also see that it is being done with Americanmadeweapons and with tacit U.S. consent. This situation provides potentammunition for America's critics, which is why the deputy leader of Hezbollah,Sheik Nairn Qassem, told a Lebanese crowd in December 2006, "Thereis no longer a political place for America in Lebanon. Do you not recall thatthe weapons fired on Lebanon were American weapons?"7 1

These policies help explain why many Arabs and Muslims are so angrywith the United States that they regard al Qaeda with sympathy, and someare even willing to support it, either directly or tacitly. A 2004 survey ofMoroccansreported that 8 percent had a "favorable" or "very favorable" image ofPresident Bush, but the comparable figure for bin Laden was 45 percent. InJordan, a key U.S. ally, the numbers were 3 percent for Bush and 55 percentfor bin Laden, who beat Bush by a margin of 58 percent in Pakistan, whosegovernment is also closely allied with the United States.7 2 The Pew GlobalAttitudes Survey reported in 2002—before the invasion of Iraq—that "publicopinion about the United States in the Middle East/Conflict Area is overwhelminglynegative," and much of this unpopularity stems from thePalestinian issue.7 3 According to the Middle East expert Shibley Telhami, "Noother issue resonates with the public in the Arab world, and many other partsof the Muslim world, more deeply than Palestine. No other issue shapes theregional perceptions of America more fundamentally than the issue of Palestine."7 4 Ussama Makdisi agrees, writing that "on no issue is Arab anger at theUnited States more widely and acutely felt than that of Palestine . . . For it isover Palestine that otherwise antithetical Arab secularist and Islamistinterpretationsof history converge in their common perception of an immensegulf separating official American avowals of support for freedom from actualAmerican policies."75 U.S. support for Israel is not the only source of anti-Americanism, of course, but it is an important one, and it makes winning thewar on terror and advancing other U.S. interests more difficult.

ISRAEL: STRATEGIC ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Other government studies and numerous public opinion polls offer thesame conclusion: Arab populations are deeply angered by America's supportfor Israel, which they regard as insensitive to Arab concerns and inconsistentwith professed U.S. values. Although many Arabs have somewhat favorableviews of U.S. science and technology, U.S. products, American moviesand TV, and even surprisingly positive views of the American people and U.S.democracy, their views of

American foreign policy—and especially U.S. supportfor Israel—are strongly negative.7 6 As a visiting Yemeni physicist remarkedin 2001, "When you go there, you really love the United States . . .but when you go back home, you find the US applies justice and fairness toits own people, but not abroad."77 A 2004 report by the Pentagon's DefenseScience Board concluded that "Muslims do not 'hate our freedom,' but ratherthey hate our policies," and the 9/11 Commission acknowledged that "it issimply a fact that American policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflictand American policy in Iraq are dominant staples of popular commentaryacross the Arab and Muslim world."78

Similarly, when the respected polling firm Zogby International asked citizensof six Arab countries if their attitude toward America was shaped bytheir feelings about American values or by U.S. policies, "an overwhelmingpercentage of respondents indicated that policy played a more importantrole." When asked open-ended questions about their "first thought" whenthey think of America, the most common answer is "unfair foreign policy."And when asked what the United States could do to improve its image, themost frequent answers are "change Middle East policy" and "stop supportingIsrael."7 9 Not surprisingly, after Congress directed the State Departmentto establish an "advisory group on public diplomacy for the Arab and MuslimWorld" in June 2003, the group's report found that "citizens in thesecountries are genuinely distressed at the plight of the Palestinians and at therole they perceive the United States to be playing."80

Prominent Arab leaders and well-informed public commentators confirmthat unconditional U.S. support for Israel has made the United Statesincreasingly unpopular throughout the Middle East. UN Special EnvoyLakhdar Brahimi, whom the Bush administration enlisted to help form an

interim Iraqi government in June 2004, said that "the great poison in the regionis the Israeli policy of domination and the suffering imposed on thePalestinians," adding that people throughout the Middle East recognizedthe "injustice of this policy and the equally unjust support of the UnitedStates for this policy." In 2004, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak warned,"There exists a hatred [of America] never equaled in the region," in part be

cause Arabs "see [Israeli Prime Minister] Sharon act as he wants, withoutthe Americans saying anything."81 King Abdullah II of Jordan offered a similarview in March 2007, telling a joint session of Congress that "the denialof justice and peace in Palestine .. . is the core issue. And this core issue isnot only producing severe consequences for our region, it is producing severeconsequences for our world."82 Not surprisingly, these pro-Americanregimes want the United States to change a policy that reinforces populardiscontent over their own ties to the United States.

U.S. support for Israel is hardly the only source of anti-Americanism inthe Arab and Islamic world, and making it more conditional would not removeall sources of friction between these countries and the United States.Examining the consequences of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians andtacit U.S. support of these policies is not to deny the presence of genuineanti-Semitism in various Arab countries or the fact that groups and governmentsin these societies sometimes fan these attitudes and use the Israel-Palestine conflict to divert attention from their own mistakes. Rather, ourpoint is simply that the United States pays a substantial price for supportingIsrael so consistently. This posture fuels hostility toward the United Statesin the Middle East, motivates anti-American extremists and aids their recruiting,gives authoritarian governments in the region an all-too-convenientscapegoat for their own failings, and makes it harder for Washington to convincepotential supporters to confront extremists in their own countries.When it comes to fighting terrorism, in short, U.S. and Israeli interestsare not identical. Backing Israel against the Palestinians makes winning thewar on terror harder, not easier, and the "partner against terror" rationaledoes not provide a compelling justification for unconditional U.S. support.

CONFRONTING ROGUE STATES

The new strategic rationale also portrays Israel as an essential ally in thecampaign against authoritarian rogue states that support terrorism and thatseek to acquire WMD . Like the "partners against

terror" argument, this familiarjustification sounds convincing at first hearing. Isn't it obvious thatdictatorships like Syria, Iran, or Saddam Hussein's Iraq are hostile both toIsrael and the United States? Aren't such regimes likely to use WMD toblackmail the United States, or give WMD to terrorists? Given these dangers,doesn't it make sense to continue generous aid to Israel, both to protectit from these dangerous neighbors and to keep the pressure on them,

thereby hastening the day when these brutal regimes either collapse orchange their ways?

In fact, this rationale does not stand up to careful scrutiny either. Althoughthe United States does have important disagreements with each ofthese regimes—most notably their support for certain terrorist organizationsand their apparent interest in acquiring WMD—they are not a dire threat tovital American interests, apart from the U.S. commitment to Israel itself.Americas main strategic interest in the Middle East is oil, and protectingaccess to this commodity mainly depends on preventing any single countryfrom controlling the entire region. This concern could justify going after oneof these states if it grew too strong or too aggressive—as the United Statesdid when it expelled Iraq from Kuwait in 1990-91—but it does not justifygoing after Iran, Iraq, and Syria at the same time.

The other features that are frequently invoked to explain why the UnitedStates should back Israel against these rogue states are even less compelling

on strategic grounds. Does the fact that they are dictatorships justify relentlessU.S. hostility? No, because the United States has allied itself with otherdictatorships when doing so advanced its interests, and it still does so today.Is their support for terrorist groups a sufficient rationale? Not really, becausethese states and these terrorist groups have refrained from attacking theUnited States and because the United States has often turned a blind eyetoward the promotion of terrorism in the past, including terrorism supportedby these same states. Like most countries, the United States has been willingto cooperate with regimes it did not necessarily like when doing so advancedU.S. interests. Washington backed Saddam Hussein and Iraq duringits war with Iran in the 1980s, for example, and it still backs Pakistan's militarydictatorship despite that government's well-documented support for Islamicterrorism in Kashmir and elsewhere. U.S. leaders were also happy toaccept Iran's help when dealing with the Taliban and pleased to get intelligenceinformation about al Qaeda from Syria. These admittedly are limitedinstances of cooperation, but they do suggest that neither state is a mortalthreat to vital U.S. interests.

What about Syrian meddling in Lebanon or a potential Iranian challengeto U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf? These issues are not trivial, but they donot justify backing Israel as strongly as the United States does. Israel's ownmeddling in Lebanon has repeatedly complicated U.S. efforts there, and itsown WM D arsenal and frequent willingness to use force have encouragedother Middle Eastern states to desire WM D of their own. As previouslynoted, Israel is not much of an asset when it comes to maintaining stability

in Lebanon or preserving a balance of power in the Gulf. As we discuss atlength in Part II, Israel and the lobby have repeatedly frustrated U.S. effortsto deal more effectively with these admittedly problematic regimes:

As a justification for helping Israel, in fact, this particular strategic argumentis essentially circular. Israel is portrayed as a vital ally for dealing with itsdangerous neighbors, but the commitment to Israel is an important reasonwhy the United States sees these states as threats in the first place. Indeed,Washington might find it easier to address the various conflicts that it doeshave with these states were its policies not constrained by the prior commitmentto Israel. In any case, these states are at present too weak to harm theUnited States

significantly (though they can certainly make life much moredifficult for certain U.S. actions, most notably in Iraq), and Israel has not beenmuch of an asset when America has been forced to take steps against them.

Even the threat posed by WM D does not provide a compelling reason tosupport Israel as strongly as the United States currently does. The UnitedStates has its own reasons to oppose the spread of WMD in the Middle East(and elsewhere), but it would not be a strategic disaster for the UnitedStates if some of these states in this region were eventually to acquire WMDdespite our best efforts. Instead, U.S. concerns about Saddam's WMD programsor Iran's current nuclear ambitions derive largely from the threat theyare said to pose to Israel. President Bush admitted as much in March 2006,saying, "The threat from Iran is, of course, their stated objective to destroyour strong ally Israel."8 3

Yet given that both Israel and the United States have powerful nuclearforces of their own, this danger is overstated. Attacking the United States orIsrael directly is out of the question, because Israel has several hundredweapons of its own and the United States has thousands. If either countrywere ever attacked, the perpetrator would immediately face a devastatingretaliation.Neither country could be blackmailed by a nuclear-armed roguestate, because the blackmailer could not carry out the threat without facingthe same fate. The Soviet Union had thousands of nuclear weapons during theCold War, was committed to and guided by a revolutionary ideology, and wasgoverned by ruthless men who placed little value on human life. Yet Moscowcould not use its vast arsenal to "blackmail" the United States, and Stalin,Khrushchev, and Brezhnev never even tried. The reason is obvious: the UnitedStates had its own weapons and could (and would) retaliate in kind.

The danger that a rogue state might decide to give one of its nuclear

weapons to a terrorist group is equally remote, because the country's leaderscould never be sure the transfer would remain undetected or that they would

not be blamed and punished afterward. Indeed, giving away the nuclearweapons that they had run grave risks to obtain is probably the last thing suchregimes would ever do. They would no longer control how the weapons mightbe used and they could never be certain that the United States (or Israel) wouldnot incinerate them if either country merely suspected that a particular "roguestate" had provided terrorists with the ability to carry out a WM D attack. If theUnited States could live with a nuclear Soviet Union or a nuclear China (whoseformer leaders were among the greatest mass murderers the world has everknown), and if it can tolerate a nuclear Pakistan and embrace a nuclear India,then it could live (however reluctantly) with a nuclear Iran as well.

It is sometimes said that deterrence cannot work against these regimes,because their leaders (such as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad)are irrational religious fanatics who would welcome martyrdom and thuscould not be effectively deterred. In the words of the Washington Post'sCharles Krauthammer, "Against millenarian fanaticism glorying in a cult ofdeath, deterrence is a mere wish."8 4 Disproving such an assertion is impossible,of course, because one can never be 100 percent certain that someworld leader might not succumb to suicidal madness. There are nonethelessgood reasons to be skeptical of such frightening claims. None of these allegedlyirrational leaders could launch a WM D attack by himself; mountingan actual strike would require the active assistance and assent of many otherpeople, all of whom would have to willingly embrace martyrdom themselves.(In Iran, for instance, authority over the military is not even in PresidentAhmadinejad's hands.) Moreover, there is no evidence suggesting that any ofthese leaders has ever sought martyrdom (Saddam Hussein certainly didn't,until the noose was nearly around his neck).

Finally, it is worth noting that such claims have been heard before andturned out to be wrong. U.S. hard-liners once argued that Soviet leaderswere ideologically driven and contemptuous of human life and thus mightnot be deferrable, and other U.S. leaders feared China's acquisition of nuclearweapons because they thought Mao Zedong was an irrational leaderwho might be willing to risk tens of

millions of people in a nuclear exchange.Secretary of State Dean Rusk once warned that "a country whose behavioris as violent, irascible, unyielding, and hostile as that of Communist China isled by leaders whose view of the world and of life itself is unreal," but Chinesenuclear conduct turned out to be quite prudent.85 U.S. leaders shouldnot be complacent about the spread of WM D in the Middle East, but thisproblem is not a sufficient strategic justification for backing Israel as stronglyas the United States currently does.

Even if Syria or Iran does present challenges for the United States inplaces like Lebanon or Iraq, or if they either have or want WMD, the U.S.relationship with Israel actually makes it harder to deal effectively withthem. Israel's nuclear arsenal is one reason why some of its neighbors wantnuclear weapons, and threatening them with regime change has merely reinforcedthat desire. America's willingness to back Israel in spite of Israel'sown nuclear arsenal and its refusal to sign the NPT also makes the UnitedStates look hypocritical when it tries to confront would-be proliferatorsabout their own weapons programs. Yet Israel is not much of an asset whenWashington contemplates using force against these regimes—as it has donetwice in Iraq—because Israel cannot participate in the fight.

Moreover, the combination of U.S. support for Israel and Israel's continuedoppression of the Palestinians has also eroded America's standing inmany other quarters and made it more difficult to obtain meaningful cooperationon important strategic issues like the war on terrorism or the relatedeffort to democratize the Middle East. As noted in Chapter 1, foreign populationsgenerally see the United States as "too supportive" of Israel, and manyforeign elites think its tacit support for Israel's policies in the OccupiedTerritories

is morally obtuse. In April 2004, for example, fifty-two former Britishdiplomats sent Prime Minister Tony Blair a letter saying that the conflict betweenIsrael and the Palestinians had "poisoned relations between the Westand the Islamic and Arab worlds," and warning that the policies of Bush andSharon were "one-sided and illegal" and will "cost yet more Israeli and Palestinianblood." Blair did not really need to be told, however, as he tried repeatedly(though unsuccessfully) to get the Bush administration to engagethis issue more seriously. Not to be outdone, a group of eighty-eight former

U.S. diplomats quickly followed suit with a similar letter to PresidentBush.8 6 Even prominent Israelis such as the veteran military correspondentZe'ev Schiff understood that "the continuation of this conflict, including theIsraeli occupation, will most certainly lead to new waves of terror; internationalterrorism, which the Americans fear so much, will spread."87The consequences of all this became clear in 2006, when U.S. efforts toforge a Sunni coalition to help deal with the deteriorating situation in Iraqand to balance a rising Iran were undermined by Sunni concerns that theUnited States had consistently taken Israel's side in its conflict with thePalestinians, and their awareness that it would be politically dangerous toget too close to the Americans. According to the Wall Street Journal, "Arabdiplomats say countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait and theUnited Arab Emirates will find it difficult to publicly stand with the U.S. on

Iran and on broad regional stability unless Washington pressures Israel on apeace initiative." Or as one Arab diplomat put it, "The road to Baghdad runsthrough Jerusalem, and not the other way around."8 8 And that is why the bipartisanIraq Study Group concluded in December 2006 that "the UnitedStates will not be able to achieve its goals in the Middle East unless theUnited States deals directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict."8 9

In short, treating Israel as America's most important ally in the campaignagainst terrorism and against assorted Middle East dictatorships exaggeratesIsrael's ability to help on these issues, overlooks how the relationship contributesto these problems, and ignores the ways that Israel's policies make

U.S. efforts to address them more difficult. Israel's strategic value has declinedsteadily since the end of the Cold War. Steadfast support for Israelcan no longer be justified by the argument that it is helping us defeat a greatpower rival; instead, backing Israel unconditionally

helps make the UnitedStates a target for radical extremists and makes America look callous andhypocritical in the eyes of many third parties, including European and Araballies. The United States still benefits from various acts of strategic cooperationwith Israel, but on balance, it is more of a liability than an asset.A DUBIOUS ALLY

A final reason to question Israel's strategic value is that it sometimes doesnot act like a loyal ally Like most states, Israel looks first and foremost to itsown interests, and it has been willing to do things contrary to American interestswhen it believed (rightly or wrongly) that doing so would advance itsown national goals. In the notorious "Lavon affair" in 1954, for example, Israeliagents tried to bomb several U.S. government offices in Egypt, in abungled attempt to sow discord between Washington and Cairo. Israel soldmilitary supplies to Iran while U.S. diplomats were being held hostage therein 1979—80, and it was one of Iran's main military suppliers during the Iran-Iraq War, even though the United States was worried about Iran and tacitlybacking Iraq. Israel later purchased $36 million worth of Iranian oil in 1989in an attempt to obtain the release of Israeli hostages in Lebanon. All ofthese acts made sense from Israel's point of view, but they were contrary toAmerican policy and harmful to overall U.S. interests.9 0

In addition to selling weapons to America's enemies, Israel has transferredAmerican technology to third countries, including potential U.S. adversarieslike China, actions that violated U.S. laws and threatened American inter

ests. In 1992, the State Department's inspector general reported that startingin 1983 there was evidence of a "systematic and growing pattern ofunauthorized transfers" by Israel.9 1 At about the same time, the General AccountingOffice officials looking into the "Dotan affair" (the embezzlementand illegal diversion of millions of dollars of U.S. military aid by the formerhead of Israeli Air Force procurement) made repeated efforts to meet with Israeliofficials to discuss the matter. According to the GAO, "The Governmentof Israel declined to discuss the issues or allow [U.S.] investigators toquestion Israeli personnel."9 2

Little has changed in recent years. Indeed, even Douglas Feith, the formerundersecretary of defense and a consistent supporter of Israel, was reportedlyangry when Israel agreed in 2004 to upgrade a killer drone it hadsold to China in 1994.9 3 "Something is going badly wrong in the [U.S.-Israeli]military relationship," said another senior Bush administration official.94

Amplifying these tensions is the extensive espionage that Israel engagesin against the United States. According to the GAO, the Jewish state "conductsthe most aggressive espionage operations against the United States ofany ally."95 Stealing economic secrets gives Israeli firms important advantagesover American businesses in the global marketplace and thus imposesadditional costs on U.S. citizens.

More worrying, however, are Israel's continued efforts to steal America'smilitary secrets. This problem is highlighted by the infamous case of JonathanPollard, an American intelligence analyst who gave Israel large quantities ofhighly classified material between 1981 and 1985. After Pollard was caught,the Israelis refused to tell the United States what Pollard gave them.9 6 ThePollard case is but the most visible tip of a larger iceberg. Israeli agents triedto steal spy-camera technology from a U.S. firm in 1986, and an arbitrationpanel later accused Israel of "perfidious," "unlawful," and "surreptitious" conductand ordered it to pay the firm, Recon/Optical Inc., some $3 million indamages. Israeli spies also gained access to confidential U.S. informationabout a Pentagon electronic intelligence program and tried unsuccessfully torecruit Noel Koch, a senior counterterrorism official in the Defense Department.The Wall Street Journal quoted John Davitt, former head of the JusticeDepartment's internal security section, saying that "those of us who workedin the espionage area regarded Israel as being the second most active foreignintelligence service in the United States."9 7

A new controversy erupted in 2004 when a key Pentagon official, LarryFranklin, was arrested on charges of passing classified information regarding

U.S. policy toward Iran to an Israeli diplomat, allegedly with the assistance

of two senior AIPAC officials, Steven Rosen and Keith Weissman. Franklineventually accepted a plea bargain and was sentenced to twelve years inprison for his role in the affair, and Rosen and Weissman are scheduled togo on trial in the fall of 2007.9 8

Israel is of course not the only country that spies on the United States,and Washington conducts extensive espionage against both allies and adversariesas well. Such behavior is neither surprising nor particularly reprehensible,because international politics is a rough business and states often dounscrupulous things in their efforts to gain an edge over other countries.Nonetheless, the close relationship between Washington and Jerusalem hasmade it easier for Israel to steal American secrets, and it has not hesitated todo just that. At the very least, Israel's willingness to spy on its principal patroncasts further doubt on its overall strategic value, especially now that theCold War is over.

CONCLUSION

There is no question that Israel has derived substantial benefits from U.S.support, although one might also argue that this support has been used topursue policies—such as settlement construction—that were not in Israel'slong-term interest. It is also clear that the United States derived somestrategic value from its aid to Israel, especially during the Cold War. Yetthese benefits cannot fully justify or explain why the United States has been

willing to give Israel such consistent support over such an extended period.Subsidizing and protecting Israel may have been a net plus for the UnitedStates at the height of the Cold War—though even this claim is not openand shut—but that rationale evaporated when the Soviet Union collapsedand the superpower competition in the Middle East ended. Today, America'sintimate embrace of Israel—and especially its willingness to subsidize it nomatter what its policies are —is not making Americans safer or more prosperous.To the contrary: unconditional support for Israel is undermining relationswith other U.S. allies, casting doubt on America's wisdom and moralvision, helping inspire a generation of anti-American extremists, and complicatingU.S. efforts to deal with a volatile but vital region. In short, thelargely unconditional "special relationship" between the United States andIsrael is no longer defensible on strategic grounds. If a convincing rationaleis to be found, we must look elsewhere. In the next chapter, we examine themoral case for American support.

3

A DWINDLING MORAL CASE

When George W Bush spoke at the annual policy conference of the AmericanIsrael Public Affairs Committee in May 2004, he invoked a set of moralthemes to help explain U.S. support for Israel. The president began hisspeech by applauding AIPAC's efforts "to strengthen the ties that bind ournations—our shared values, our strong commitment to freedom." He wenton to emphasize that Israel and the United States "have much in common.We're both . . . born of struggle and sacrifice. We're both founded by immigrantsescaping religious persecution in other lands. We have both built vibrantdemocracies, built on the rule of law and market economies. Andwe're both countries founded on certain basic beliefs: that God watchesover the affairs of men, and values every life. These ties have made us naturalallies, and these ties will never be broken."

Bush also noted one important difference and drew a moral conclusionfrom it. Whereas the United States was relatively safe in the past because ofits geographical location, "Israel has faced a different situation as a smallcountry in a tough neighborhood. The Israeli people have always had enemiesat their borders and terrorists close at hand. Again and again, Israel hasdefended itself with skill and heroism. And as a result of the courage of theIsraeli people, Israel has earned the respect of the American people."l

Bush's remarks underscore the degree to which U.S. support for

Israel isoften justified not on strategic grounds but on the basis of essentially moralclaims. The moral rationale for American support rests on several distinctlines of argument, and Israel's supporters often invoke one or more of theseclaims in order to justify the "special relationship." Specifically, Israel is saidto deserve generous and nearly unconditional U.S. support because it is

weak and surrounded by enemies dedicated to destroying it; it is a democracy,which is a morally preferable form of government; the Jewish peoplehave suffered greatly from past crimes; Israel's conduct has been morally superiorto its adversaries' behavior, especially compared to the Palestinians;the Palestinians rejected the generous peace offer that Israel made at CampDavid in July 2000 and opted for violence instead; and it is clear from theBible that Israel's creation is God's will. Taken together, these arguments underpinthe more general claim that Israel is the one country in the MiddleEast that shares American values and therefore enjoys broad support amongthe American people. Many U.S. policy makers accept these various arguments,but even if they did not, the American people supposedly want themto back Israel and certainly do not want them to put any pressure on theJewish state.

Upon close inspection, the moral rationale for unqualified U.S. supportis not compelling. There is a strong moral case for supporting Israel's existence,but that fortunately is not in danger at present. Viewed objectively,

Israel's past and present conduct offers little moral basis for privileging itover the Palestinians or for undertaking policies in the region that are not inAmerica's strategic interest.

The moral rationale relies heavily on a particular understanding of Israel'shistory that is widely held by many Americans (both Jews and gentiles).In that story, Jews in the Middle East have long been victims, just asthey were in Europe. "The Jew," Elie Wiesel tells us, "has never been anexecutioner;he is almost always the victim."2 The Arabs, and especially thePalestinians, are the victimizers, bearing a marked similarity to the anti-Semites who persecuted Jews in Europe. This perspective is clearly evidentin Leon Uris's famous novel Exodus (1958), which portrays the Jews as bothvictims and heroes and the Palestinians as villains and cowards. This booksold twenty million copies between 1958 and 1980 and was turned into apopular movie (1960). Scholars have shown that the Exodus narrative hashad an enduring influence on how Americans think about the Arab-Israeliconflict.3

The conventional wisdom about how Israel was created and how it hassubsequently behaved toward the Palestinians as well as neighboring statesis wrong. It is based on a set of myths about past events that Israeli scholarshave systematically demolished over the past twenty years.4 While there isno question that Jews were frequently victims in Europe, in the past centurythey have often been the victimizers in the Middle East, and their main victimswere and continue to be the Palestinians. Not only is the basic point

backed up by an abundance of evidence, but it is also intuitively plausible.After all, how could Jews coming to Palestine from Europe create a state oftheir own without taking harsh measures against the Arab population thatalready dwelt in the land they wanted for their new state? Just as the Europeanswho created the United States and Canada could not do so withoutcommitting significant crimes against the native inhabitants, it was virtuallyimpossible for the Zionists to carve out a Jewish state in Palestine withoutcommitting similar crimes against the local residents, who were bound to resenttheir encroachments and attempt to resist them. Unfortunately, this"new history," as it is called in Israel, has not been adequately acknowledgedin the United States, which is one reason why the moral rationale still carriessignificant weight for many Americans.5

Israel's more recent conduct is a different matter, however. With

theglobal reach of the Internet and twenty-four-hour cable news networks,many Americans have seen considerable evidence of Israel's brutal treatmentof its Palestinian subjects in the Occupied Territories. They have alsoseen the consequences of Israel's actions in the second Lebanon war(2006), in which the Israel Defense Forces pummeled civilian targets acrossLebanon and then dumped several million deadly cluster bomblets in thetowns and villages of southern Lebanon.6

Although these actions have tarnished Israel's public image in theUnited States, its supporters remain undaunted and continue to makethe moral case for sustaining the present relationship between those twocountries. In fact, a good case can be made that current U.S. policy conflictswith basic American values and that if the United States were to choose sideson the basis of moral considerations alone, it would back the Palestinians,not Israel. After all, Israel is prosperous and has the most powerful militaryin the Middle East. No state would deliberately start a war with it today. Israeldoes have a serious terrorism problem, but that is mainly the consequenceof colonizing the Occupied Territories. By contrast, the Palestiniansare stateless, impoverished, and facing a deeply uncertain future. Even allowingfor the Palestinians' various shortcomings, which group now has thestronger moral claim to U.S. sympathy?

Getting to the bottom of this issue requires that we look in more detail atthe particular arguments that make up the moral rationale. Our focus will beprimarily on Israeli behavior, and no attempt will be made to compare it withthe actions of other states in the region or in other parts of the world. We arenot focusing on Israel's conduct because we have an animus toward the Jewish

state, or because we believe that its behavior is particularly worthy of

censure. On the contrary, we recognize that virtually all states have committedserious crimes at one time or another in their history, and we are cognizantof the fact that state building is often a violent enterprise. We are alsoaware that some of Israel's Arab neighbors have at times acted with greatbrutality. We focus on Israel's actions because the United States provides itwith a level of material and diplomatic support that is substantially greaterthan what it gives to other states, and it does so at the expense of its owninterests.Our aim is to determine whether Israel deserves special treatmentbecause it acts in an exceptionally virtuous manner, as many of its supportersclaim. Does Israel behave significantly better than other states do? Thehistorical record suggests that it does not.

BACKING THE UNDERDOG

Israel is often portrayed as weak and besieged, a Jewish David surroundedby a hostile Arab Goliath. This image has been carefully nurtured by Israelileaders and sympathetic writers, but the opposite is closer to the truth. Israelhas always been militarily stronger than its Arab adversaries. ConsiderIsrael's 1948 War of Independence, where the popular belief is that theZionists—who fought against five Arab armies as well as the Palestinians—were badly outnumbered and outgunned. Benny Morris, a prominent Israelihistorian, refers to this description of the balance of power as "one of themost tenacious myths relating to 1948."7

One might think that Israeli forces were at a significant quantitative andqualitative disadvantage in 1948, because it was a small new country surroundedby Arab states that had far more people and far greater material resources.In fact, comparing the population size and the resources of Israeland the Arab world tells you little about the balance of military power betweenthem. As Morris notes, "The atlas map showing a minuscule Israeland a giant surrounding Arab sea did not, and, indeed, for the time being,still does not, accurately reflect the true balance of military power in the region.Nor do the comparative population figures; in 1948, the Yishuv [theJewish settlement in Palestine before Israel was created] numbered some650,000 souls—as opposed to 1.2 million Palestinian Arabs and some 30 millionArabs in the surrounding states (including Iraq)."8 The reason is simple:the Arab states have been remarkably ineffective at

translating those latentresources into actual military power, while Israel, by contrast, has been especiallygood at doing so.

The War of Independence was actually two separate conflicts. The firstwas a civil war between the Jews and the Palestinians, which started on November29, 1947 (the day of the UN decision to partition Mandate Palestine)and ran until May 14, 1948 (the day Israel declared its independence).The second was an international war between Israel and five Arab armies,which began on May 15, 1948, and ended on January 7, 1949.

The Zionists won a lopsided victory over the Palestinians in their civilwar because they enjoyed a decisive advantage in numbers and quality ofboth soldiers and weapons.9 Jewish fighting units were far better organizedand trained than the Palestinian forces, which had been decimated by theBritish during the 1936-39 revolt and had not recovered by 1948. As theIsraeli historian Ilan Pappe notes, "A few thousand irregular Palestiniansand Arabs were facing tens of thousands of well-trained Jewish troops."10Not surprisingly, Israeli leaders were fully aware of this power imbalanceand sought to take advantage of it. In fact, Yigal Yadin, a senior militarycommanderin the 1948 war and the IDF's second chief of staff, maintained thatif it had not been for the British presence in Palestine until May 1948, "wecould have quelled the Arab riot in one month."1 1

The Israelis also had a clear advantage in manpower throughout their

war with the five Arab armies. Morris notes that when the fighting started inmid-May, Israel "fielded some 35,000 armed troops as compared with the25-30,000 of the Arab invading armies. By the time of Operation Dani, inJuly, the IDF had 65,000 men under arms and by December, close to 90,000men under arms—at each stage significantly outnumbering the combinedstrength of the Arab armies ranged against them in Palestine."1 2 Israel alsoenjoyed an advantage in weaponry, save for a brief twenty-five days at thestart of that conflict (May 15-June 10, 1948). Moreover, with the possibleexception of Transjordan's small Arab Legion, the quality of the Israeli fightingforces was far superior to their Arab adversaries and they were much betterorganized as well. In short, the Zionists won the civil war against thePalestinians and the international war against the invading Arab armies becausethey were more powerful than their adversaries, despite the absoluteadvantage in population that their Arab foes enjoyed. As Morris notes, "Itwas superior Jewish firepower, manpower, organization, and command andcontrol that determined the outcome of battle."1 3

The IDF won quick and decisive victories against Egypt in 1956 andagainst Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in 1967—before large-scale U.S. aid beganflowing to Israel. In October 1973, Israel was a victim of a stunning surpriseattack by the Egyptian and Syrian armies. Although an outnumbered IDF

suffered serious setbacks in the first days of fighting, it quickly recoveredand was on the verge of destroying the Egyptian and Syrian armies when theUnited States and the Soviet Union intervened to halt the fighting. The remarkableturnaround, according to Morris, was due to the fact that "theIDF's machines, both in the air and on the ground, were simply superior. Sowas its manpower: Israeli pilots, maintenance and ground control staffs,tank officers, and men were far better trained and led than their Arab counterparts."14 These victories offer eloquent evidence of Israeli patriotism, organizationalability, and military prowess, but they also reveal that Israel wasfar from helpless even in its earliest years.1 5

Today, Israel is the strongest military power in the Middle East. Its conventionalforces are far superior to those of its neighbors, and it is the onlystate in the region with nuclear weapons. Egypt and Jordan have signedpeace treaties with Israel, and Saudi Arabia has offered to do so as well.Syria has lost its Soviet patron, Iraq has been decimated

by three disastrouswars, and Iran is hundreds of miles away and has never directly attacked Israel.The Palestinians barely have effective police, let alone a military thatcould threaten Israel's existence, and they are further weakened by profoundinternal divisions. The deaths caused by Palestinian suicide bombers aretragic and strike fear in the hearts of all Israelis, but they do relatively littledamage to Israel's economy much less threaten its territorial integrity.16Groups like Hezbollah can launch low-yield missiles and rockets at Israeland might be able to kill a few hundred Israelis over the course of months oryears, but these attacks do not represent an existential threat to Israel. Accordingto a 2005 assessment by Tel Aviv University's prestigious Jaffee Centerfor Strategic Studies, "The strategic balance decidedly favors Israel,which has continued to widen the qualitative gap between its own militarycapability and deterrence powers and those of its neighbors."17 If backingthe underdog were a compelling rationale, the United States would be supportingIsrael's opponents.

Of course, there is another dimension to the argument that Israel haslong been under siege and is always the victim: the claim that despite Israel'smilitary superiority, its Arab neighbors are determined to destroy it. Indeed,some argue that the Arabs precipitated wars in 1948, 1967, and 1973 in order"to drive the Jews into the Sea."1 8

While there is no question that Israel faced serious threats in its earlyyears, the Arabs were not attempting to destroy Israel in any of those threewars. This is not because the Arabs were happy about the presence of a Jewishstate in their midst—-they clearly were not—but rather because they have

never had the capability to win a war against Israel, much less defeat itdecisively.There is no question that some Arab leaders talked about "driving theJews into the Sea" during the 1948 war, but this was largely rhetoric designedto appease their publics. In fact, the Arab leaders were mainly concernedwith gaining territory for themselves at the expense of the Palestinians, one ofthe many occasions when Arab governments put their own interests aheadof the Palestinians'welfare. Morris, for example, writes:

What ensued, once Israel declared its independence on 14 May 1948and the Arab states invaded on 15 May, was "a general land grab," witheveryone—Israel, Transjordan, Syria, Egypt, and even Lebanon—benton preventing the birth of a Palestinian Arab state and carving outchunks of Palestine for themselves. Contrary to the old historiography,Abdullah's [king of Transjordan] invasion of eastern Palestinewas clearly designed to conquer territory for his kingdom—at the expenseof the Palestinian Arabs—rather than to destroy the Jewishstate. Indeed, the Arab Legion stuck meticulously, throughout thewar, to its non-aggressive stance vis-à-vis the Yishuv and the Jewishstate's territory .. . It is not at all clear that Abdullah and Glubb [theBritish general who commanded Transjordan's Arab Legion] wouldhave been happy to see the collapse in May 1948 of the fledgling Jewishrepublic. Certainly Abdullah was far more troubled by theprospects of the emergence of a Palestinian Arab state and of an expandedSyria and an expanded Egypt on his frontiers than by theemergence of a small Jewish state.1 9

And Abdullah, as Morris notes, was the only Arab leader who "committedthe full weight" of his military power to attacking Israel, "indicating eitherinefficiency or, perhaps, a less than wholehearted seriousness about the declaredaim of driving the Jews into the sea." Shlomo Ben-Ami, a noted historianand a former Israeli foreign minister, has a similar view of Arab goalsin the 1948 war: "111 prepared and poorly co-ordinated, the Arab armies weredragged into the war by popular pressure in their home states, and becausetheir leaders each had his own agenda of territorial expansion. Securing theestablishment of a Palestinian state . . . was less of a motive for the Arableaders who sent their armies to Palestine than establishing their own territorialclaims or thwarting those of their rivals in the Arab coalition."2 0

The myth of Israel as a victim is also reflected in the conventional wisdomabout the 1967 war, which claims that Egypt and Syria are principally re

sponsible for starting it. In particular, the Arabs are said to have been preparingto attack Israel when the IDF beat them to the punch and scored a stunningvictory.21 It is clear from the release of new documents about the war,however, that the Arabs did not intend to initiate a war against Israel in thelate spring of 1967, much less try to destroy the Jewish state.2 2 Avi Shlaim,a distinguished Israeli "new historian," writes, "There is general agreementamong commentators that [Egyptian President] Nasser neither wanted norplanned to go to war with Israel."2 3 In fact, Israel bears considerableresponsibilityfor the outbreak of the war. Shlaim writes that "Israel's strategy of escalationon the Syrian front was probably the single most important factor indragging the Middle East to war in June 1967, despite the conventional wisdomon the subject that singles out Syrian aggression as the principal causeof war."24 Ben-Ami goes even farther, writing that Yitzhak Rabin, the IDFchief of staff, "intentionally led Israel into a war with Syria. Rabin wasdeterminedto provoke a war with Syria . . . because he thought this was the onlyway to stop the Syrians from supporting Fatah attacks against Israel."2 5

None of this is to deny that Egypt's decision in May 1967 to close theStraits of Tiran was a legitimate cause of concern to Israel. But it was not aharbinger of an imminent Egyptian attack, and that point was recognized byAmerican policy makers and many Israeli leaders. Serious diplomatic effortswere also under way to solve the crisis peacefully. Yet Israel chose to attackanyway, because its leaders ultimately preferred war to a peaceful resolution

of the crisis. In particular, Israel's military commanders wanted to inflictsignificantmilitary defeats on their two main adversaries—Egypt and Syria—in order to strengthen Israeli deterrence over the long term.2 6 Some also hadterritorial ambitions. General Ezer Weizman, the IDF's chief of operations,reflected this sentiment when he said on the eve of the war, "We are on thebrink of a second War of Independence, with all its accomplishments."2 7 Inshort, Israel was not preempting an impending attack when it struck the firstblow on June 5, 1967. Instead, it was launching a preventive war—a waraimed at affecting the balance of power over time—or, as Menachem Beginput it, a "war of choice." In his words, "We must be honest with ourselves.We decided to attack him [Egyptian President Nasser]."2 8

The Egyptians and the Syrians certainly did attack Israel in October1973, but it is a well-established fact that both Arab armies were pursuing alimited aims strategy. The Egyptians hoped to conquer a slice of territoryin the Sinai Peninsula and then bargain with Israel for the return of the restof the Sinai, while the Syrians hoped to recapture the Golan Heights. Neitherthe Egyptians nor the Syrians intended to invade Israel, much less

threaten its existence. Not only did Israel have the most formidable army inthe region, but it also had nuclear weapons, which would have made any attemptto conquer it suicidal. Benny Morris puts the point well: "PresidentsAnwar Sadat of Egypt and Hafez Assad of Syria sought to regain the territorieslost in 1967. Neither aimed to destroy Israel."29 In fact, key decisionmakers in both Cairo and Damascus recognized that they were pursuing anespecially risky strategy by picking a fight with the mighty IDF. GeneralHassan el Badri, who helped plan the Egyptian attack, remarked that "it almostseemed that success would be impossible."3 0 And these doubters werecorrect, because the IDF, after recovering from the initial attack, routedboth Arab armies.

With the possible exception of Iran, it is hard to make the case today thatIsrael's neighbors are bent on destroying it. As noted, Israel has signed peacetreaties with Egypt and Jordan, and, as will be discussed in Chapter 9, Israelwalked away from a possible peace treaty with Syria in 2000. At an Arabsummit in March 2002, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia attempted to defusethe Israeli-Palestinian conflict by putting forward a proposal calling forfull recognition of Israel by virtually every Arab government and

normalizationof relations with the Jewish state. In return, Israel would have to withdrawfrom the Occupied Territories and work toward a fair solution to thePalestinian refugee problem. The initiative was unanimously endorsed bythe Arab League. Even Saddam Hussein backed it.3 1 The proposal wentnowhere at the time, but the Saudis resurrected it in early 2007. There iscertainly no evidence that post-Saddam Iraq is interested in destroying Israel.While Hamas and Hezbollah may reject Israel's existence and inflictsuffering, they do not, as noted, have the capability to pose a mortal danger.Iran would obviously be a serious threat to Israel if it acquired nuclearweapons, but as long as Israel has its own nuclear arsenal, Iran cannot attackit without being destroyed itself.

AIDING A FELLOW DEMOCRACY

American backing is often justified by the claim that Israel is a fellow democracy.Indeed, its defenders frequently remind Americans that Israel is theonly democracy in the Middle East and that it is surrounded by hostiledictatorships.This rationale sounds convincing, but it cannot account for the currentlevel of U.S. support. After all, there are many democracies around theworld, but none receives the level of unconditional aid that Israel does.

In fact, whether a country is democratic is not a reliable indicator of howWashington will relate to it. The United States has overthrown a few democraticgovernments in the past and has supported numerous dictators whendoing so was thought to advance U.S. interests. The Eisenhower administration

overthrew a democratically elected government in Iran in 1953, while theReagan administration supported Saddam Hussein in the 1980s. Today, theBush administration has good relations with dictators like Hosni Mubarak inEgypt and Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan, and at the same time it has workedto undermine the democratically elected Hamas government in the OccupiedTerritories. It also has an acrimonious relationship with Hugo Chavez,the elected leader of Venezuela. Being democratic neither justifies nor fullyexplains the extent of American support for Israel.

The "shared democracy" rationale is also weakened by aspects of Israelidemocracy that are at odds with core American values. The United States isa liberal democracy where people of any race, religion, or ethnicity are supposedto enjoy equal rights. While Israel's citizens are of many backgrounds,including Arab, Muslim, and Christian, among others, it was explicitlyfounded as a Jewish state, and whether a citizen is regarded as Jewish ordinarilydepends on kinship (verifiable Jewish ancestry).3 2 Israel's Jewish characteris clearly reflected in the Declaration of the Establishment of the Stateof Israel, which was officially proclaimed on May 14, 1948. It explicitlyrefers to the United Nations' recognition "of the right of the Jewish peopleto establish their state," openly proclaims "the establishment of a Jewishstate in Eretz-Israel," and later describes the new state as "the sovereignJewish people settled in its own land."3 3

Given Israel's Jewish character, its leaders have long emphasized the importanceof maintaining an unchallenged Jewish majority within its borders.Israelis worry a great deal about the flow of Jews and Palestinians into andout of Israel, the relative birthrates of Palestinians and Jews, and the possibilitythat expanding Israel's borders beyond the pre-1967 lines might resultin many more Arabs living in their midst. David Ben-Gurion, for example,proclaimed that "any Jewish woman who, as far as it depends on her, doesnot bring into the world at least four healthy children is shirking her duty tothe nation, like a soldier who evades military service."34 There are now about

5.3 million Jews and 1.36 million Arabs living in Israel, including the disputedarea of East Jerusalem. There are another 3.8 million Palestinians inGaza and the West Bank, which means that there are only about 140,000more Jews than Palestinians living in what used to be called Mandate Palestine,and by almost all accounts the Palestinians have a higher birthrate than

the Jews.3 5 It is not surprising, in light of these numbers, that it is commonplacethese days for Israeli Jews to talk about their fellow Arab citizens andPalestinian subjects as a potential "demographic threat."3 6

One might think that although Israel is a Jewish state at its core, its BasicLaws (there are eleven) still guarantee equal rights for all its citizens,Arabs or Jews. But that is not the case. The initial draft of the Basic Law onHuman Dignity and Liberty, which approximates the U.S. Bill of Rights,contained language that promised equality for all Israelis: "All are equal beforethe law, and there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of gender,religion, nationality, race, ethnic group, country of origin or any other irrelevantfactor."3 7 Ultimately, however, a Knesset committee removed thatclause from the final version that became law in 1992. Since then, Arabmembers of Israel's Knesset have made numerous attempts to amend thatBasic Law by adding language that provides for equality before the law. Buttheir Jewish colleagues have refused to go along, a situation that stands inmarked contrast to the United States, where the equality principle is enshrinedin law.3 8

In addition to Israel's commitment to maintaining its Jewish identity andits refusal to grant de jure equality for non-Jews, Israel's 1.36 million Arabsare de facto treated as second-class citizens. An Israeli government commissionfound in 2003, for example, that Israel behaves in a "neglectful and discriminatory"manner toward them.3 9 Indeed, there is widespread supportamong Israeli Jews for this unequal treatment of Israeli Arabs. A poll releasedin March 2007 found that 55 percent of Israeli Jews wanted segregatedentertainment facilities, while more than 75 percent said they wouldnot live in the same building as an Israeli Arab. More than half of the respondentssaid that for a Jewish woman to marry an Arab is equal to nationaltreason, and 50 percent said that they would refuse employment if their immediate

supervisor was an Arab.4 0 The Israel Democracy Institute reportedin May 2003 that 53 percent of Israeli Jews "are against full equality for theArabs," while 77 percent of Israeli Jews believe that "there should be a Jewishmajority on crucial political decisions." Only 31 percent "support havingArab political parties in the government."41 That sentiment squares with thefact that Israel did not appoint its first Muslim Arab cabinet minister untilJanuary 2007, almost six decades after the founding of the state. And eventhat one appointment, which was to the minor portfolio of science, sports,and culture, was highly controversial.4 2

Israel's treatment of its Arab citizens is more than just discriminatory. Forexample, to limit the number of Arabs in its midst, Israel does not permit

Palestinians who marry Israeli citizens to become citizens themselves anddoes not give these spouses the right to live in Israel. The Israeli humanrights organization B'Tselem called this restriction "a racist law that determineswho can live here according to racist criteria."4 3 Also, the Olmert governmentis pushing—and the Knesset's ministerial committee on legislationapproved on January 10, 2007—a law that would allow the courts to revokethe citizenship of "unpatriotic" citizens. This legislation, which is clearlyaimed at Israeli Arabs, was labeled "a drastic and extreme move that harmscivil liberties" by Israel's attorney general.4 4 Such laws may be understandablein light of Israel's founding principles—the explicit aim of creating aJewish state—but they are not consistent with America's image of a multiethnicdemocracy in which all citizens are supposed to be treated equally regardlessof their ancestry.

In early 2007, Benjamin Netanyahu apologized to ultra-Orthodox Israeliswith large families for the hardships that were caused by welfare cuts that hehad made in 2002 when he was finance minister. He noted, however, thatthere was at least one important and unexpected benefit of these cuts: "therewas a dramatic drop in the birth rate" within the "non-Jewish public."4 5 ForNetanyahu, like many Israelis who are deeply worried about the so-calledArab demographic threat, the fewer Israeli Arab births, the better.

Netanyahu's comments would almost certainly be condemned if made inthe United States. Imagine the outcry that would arise here if a U.S. cabinetofficial spoke of the benefits of a policy that had reduced the birthratesof African Americans and Hispanics, thereby preserving

a white majority.But such statements are not unusual in Israel, where important leaders havea history of making derogatory comments about Palestinians and are rarelysanctioned for them. Menachem Begin once said that "Palestinians arebeasts walking on two legs," while former IDF Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan referredto them as "drugged roaches in a bottle" and also said that "a goodArab is a dead Arab." Another former chief of staff, Moshe Ya'alon, referredto the Palestinian threat as like a "cancer" on which he was performing"chemotherapy."46

Such discriminatory views are not restricted to Israeli leaders. In a recentsurvey of Jewish high school students in Israel, 75 percent of the respondentssaid that Arabs are "uneducated." The same percentage said that theyare "uncivilized," while 74 percent of those polled said that Arabs are "unclean."Commenting on this last finding, Larry Derfner wrote in the JerusalemPost: "To say Arabs are unclean is not a hard-line political statement.It's not an unduly harsh comment on Arab behavior. To say Arabs are un

clean is to evince an irrational, hysterical, impenetrable, absolute hatred foran entire ethnic group—which, in fact, happens not to be unclean, no morethan Jews are. To say Arabs are unclean is an expression of racism in aboutits purest, most virulent form." The person who oversaw the survey said,"We were not surprised by the outcome of the research. Anyone who is familiarwith the field knows that these warped perceptions exist, but thesefindings are at the most severe extreme of a disturbing phenomenon." It isnoteworthy that the same survey polled Israeli Arab youth as well, and

Derfner reports that "while their attitudes toward Jews are awful, they'reconsiderably less awful than the Jewish students' attitudes toward them."4 7

These hostile attitudes toward Israeli Arabs, coupled with fears about a"demographic threat" and the desire to maintain a Jewish majority, have ledto considerable support among Israeli Jews for expelling or "transferring"much of the Arab population from Israel. Indeed, Avigdor Lieberman, whowas appointed deputy prime minister for strategic threats in 2006, has madeit clear that he favors expulsion, so as to make Israel "as much as possible" ahomogeneous Jewish state. Specifically, he advocates trading portions of Israelthat are densely packed with Arabs for areas of the West Bank that containJewish settlers. He is not the first Israeli cabinet minister to advocateexpulsion.4 8

Although he is a controversial figure, Lieberman is not an outlier in Israelon this issue. The Israel Democracy Institute reported in May 2003 that57 percent of Israel's Jews "think that the Arabs should be encouraged to emigrate."A 2004 survey conducted by Haifa University's Center for the Study ofNational Security found that the number had increased to 63.7 percent. Oneyear later, in 2005, the Palestinian Center for Israel Studies found that 42 percentof Israeli Jews believed that their government should encourage IsraeliArabs to leave, while another 17 percent tended to agree with the idea. Thefollowing year, the Center for Combating Racism found that 40 percent of Israel'sJews wanted their leaders to encourage the Arab population to emigrate,while the Israel Democracy Institute found the number to be 62 percent.4 9 If40 percent or more of white Americans declared that blacks, Hispanics, andAsians "should be encouraged" to leave the United States, it would surelyprompt vehement criticism.

These attitudes are perhaps to be expected, given the long conflict betweenIsraelis and Palestinians and the considerable suffering it has producedon both sides. They are also no worse than the attitudes that manyAmericans had for different minority groups (especially African Americans)throughout much of American history. Yet whatever their origins, they are

clearly attitudes that would now earn widespread condemnation here in theUnited States, if their existence were more widely known, and they pose aserious challenge to clichés about "our shared values, our strong commitmentto freedom."

Finally, Israels democratic status is undermined by its refusal to grantthe Palestinians a viable state of their own and by its continued impositionof a legal, administrative, and military regime in the Occupied Territoriesthat denies them basic human rights. Israel at present controls the lives ofabout 3.8 million Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, while colonizinglands on which they have long dwelt. Israel formally withdrew from Gaza inthe summer of 2005 but continues to maintain substantial control over itsresidents.50 Specifically, Israel controls air, sea, and land access, whichmeans that the Palestinians are effectively prisoners within Gaza, able to enteror leave only with Israeli approval. Jan Egeland, a senior UN figure, andJan Eliasson, the Swedish foreign minister, wrote in September 2006 thatthe Palestinians are "living in a cage," which naturally has had devastatingeffects on their economy, as well as their mental and physical well-being.5 1

On the West Bank, Israel continues to expropriate Palestinian land andbuild settlements. The situation was succinctly described in a Haaretz editorialin late December 2006: "Virtually not a week goes by without a newrevelation, each more sensational and revolting than the previous one, aboutthe building spree in West Bank settlements, in blatant violation of the lawand in complete contradiction to official government policy."52 Indeed, theIsraeli organization Peace Now recently released a study based on Israeligovernment records, which shows that more than 32 percent of the landthat Israel holds for the purpose of building settlements is privately ownedby Palestinians. Israel intends to keep almost all of this land forever. Thisseizure of Palestinian property violates not only Israeli law but also a fundamentalprinciple of democracy: the protection of private property.53

In sum, Israel has a vibrant democratic order for its Jewish citizens, who

can and do criticize their government and choose their leaders in open andfree elections. Freedom of the press is also alive and well in Israel, where,paradoxically, it is much easier to criticize Israeli policy than it is in theUnited States. This is why so much of the evidence in this study is drawnfrom the Israeli press. Despite these positive features, Arab Israelis aresystematicallymarginalized, the millions of Palestinians in the Occupied Territoriesare denied full political rights, and the "shared democracy" rationale iscorrespondingly weakened.

COMPENSATION FOR PAST CRIMES

A third moral justification is the history of Jewish suffering in the ChristianWest, especially the tragic experience of the Holocaust. Because Jews werepersecuted for centuries and many believe they can be safe only in a Jewishhomeland, Israel is said to deserve special treatment. This view formed thebasis for the original Zionist program, played an important role in convincingthe United States and other countries to back Israel's founding, and continuesto resonate today.

There is no question that Jews suffered greatly from the despicable legacyof anti-Semitism and that Israel's creation was an appropriate response to along record of crimes. This history provides a strong moral case for supportingIsrael's founding and continued existence. This backing is also consistentwith America's general commitment to national self-determination. But onecannot ignore the fact that the creation of Israel involved additional crimesagainst a largely innocent third party: the Palestinians. Crimes against Jewsjustify backing Israel's existence, but its crimes against Palestinians undermineits claim to special treatment.

The history of these events is well documented. When political Zionismbegan in earnest in the late nineteenth century, there were only about fifteenthousand to seventeen thousand Jews living in Palestine.5 4 In 1893, forexample, the Arabs comprised roughly 95 percent of the population, andthough under Ottoman control, they had been in continuous possession ofthis territory for thirteen hundred years.5 5 The old Zionist adage that Palestinewas "a land without people for a people without a land" was dead wrongregarding the land; it was occupied by another people.5 6

The early Zionists hoped that the waves of Jews who began leavingEurope in the last decades of the nineteenth century would come to Palestine,allowing the Jews to gain a decisive numerical advantage over the Arabsthere. But that did not happen, mainly because most of these Jews preferredto go to the United States. Only

one hundred thousand of the four millionJews who left Europe between 1880 and 1920 went to Palestine.57 In fact,until Hitler came to power, the Jews in Palestine could not fill "the generousimmigration quotas allowed by the British."5 8 In 1948, when Israel wasfounded, its 650,000 Jews were only about 35 percent of Palestine's populationand they owned only 7 percent of its land.5 9

From the start, the leading Zionists were determined to create a Jewishstate that covered virtually all of Palestine, and even parts of Lebanon andSyria.6 0 Of course, there were differences among them on where they

thought the borders should be drawn in an ideal world, and almost all recognizedthat it might not be possible to realize all of their territorial ambitions.The mainstream Zionist leadership, it should be emphasized, was never interestedin establishing a binational state where Arabs and Jews lived side byside in a country that had no religious identity and might even have moreArabs than Jews. The goal from the beginning was to create instead a Jewishstate in which Jews comprised at least 85 percent of the population.61

The Zionists' ambitions also went beyond a permanent partition of Palestine.It is widely believed in the United States, especially among Israel's supporters,that the Zionists were willing to agree to a permanently partitioned

Palestine, and indeed they did agree to the partition plans put forward byBritain's Peel Commission in 1937 and the UN in 1947. But their acceptanceof these plans did not mean that they intended to accept only part ofPalestine in perpetuity, or that they were willing to support the creation of aPalestinian state. As recent scholarship makes abundantly clear, the Zionistleadership was sometimes willing to accept partition as a first step, but thiswas a tactical maneuver and not their real objective. They had no intentionof coexisting alongside a viable Palestinian state over the long run, as thatoutcome was in direct conflict with their dream of creating a Jewish state inall of Palestine.

There was fierce opposition among the Zionists to the Peel Commission'spartition plan, and their leader, David Ben-Gurion, was barely able to get hisfellow Zionists to accept it. They eventually agreed to the proposal, however,because they recognized that Ben-Gurion intended eventually to take all ofthe land of Palestine. The Zionist leader made this point clearly in the summerof 1937 when he told the Zionist Executive, "After the formation of alarge army in the wake of the establishment of the state, we will abolish partitionand expand to the whole of Palestine." Similarly, he told his son Amosthat same year, "Erect a Jewish State at once, even if it is not in the wholeland. The rest will come in the course of time. It must come."6 2

The Peel Commission's plan went nowhere in 1937, and over the courseof the ensuing decade the Zionists remained committed to incorporating allof Mandate Palestine into a future Jewish state. Ben-Gurion made a numberof comments in the first half of 1947 that show he still wanted all ofPalestine. For example, the Israeli scholar Uri Ben-Eliezer reports:

On May 13, 1947, Ben-Gurion told a meeting of the Jewish Agency

Executive which was held in the United States: "We want the Land

of Israel in its entirety. That was the original intention." A week later,

speaking to the Elected Assembly in Jerusalem, the leader of theYishuv wondered: "Does anyone among us disagree that the originalintention of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, and the

originalintention of the hopes harbored by generations of the Jewishpeople, was finally to establish a Jewish state in the whole Land of Israel?"Speaking to the Mapai Secretariat in June, Ben-Gurion statedthat it would be a mistake to forgo any part of the land. We have noright to do that, he said, and there is no need for it.6 3

Later that year, in November, the UN devised a new plan to partitionPalestine between the Zionists and the Palestinian Arabs. The Zionists publiclyaccepted this plan as well. But in fact Ben-Gurion had already negotiateda deal with King Abdullah of Transjordan to divide up Palestinebetween Israel and Transjordan and deny the Palestinians a state.6 4 This secretarrangement, which Britain endorsed, allowed Transjordan to acquirethe West Bank and Israel to take what it could of the rest of Palestine.The deal was ultimately implemented during the 1948 war, although in asomewhat disjointed fashion. Israeli leaders, not surprisingly, gave seriousthought during the war to conquering the West Bank and taking all of MandatePalestine for their new state, but they decided that the likely costs outweighedthe potential benefits. Transjordan, which later became Jordan,controlled the West Bank until the 1967 Six-Day War, when the IDF conqueredit. In short, Israel's founding fathers were determined from the beginningto create a "greater Israel," which left no room for a Palestinian stateand little room for Palestinians inside the Jewish state.

Given that Arabs heavily outnumbered Jews in Palestine and that theZionists were bent on conquering as much territory as feasible, they had littlechoice but to expel large numbers of Arabs from the territory that wouldeventually become Israel. There was no other way to accomplish their objective,as the Arabs were hardly likely to give up their land voluntarily. This iswhy the Peel Commission's plan to partition Palestine called explicitly forpopulation transfer. It is also why the UN partition plan, which called forestablishing

an Israel that was 55 percent Jewish and 45 percent Arab, was unworkable.6 5 There was certainly no way that a Jewish state could be createdin all of Palestine without convincing large numbers of Arabs to leave.

In light of these realities, expulsion was a frequent topic of conversationamong Zionists since the earliest days of the movement, and it was widelyrecognized as the only realistic way to solve the demographic problem thatstood in the way of creating a Jewish state.6 6 Ben-Gurion saw the problem

clearly, writing in 1941 that "it is impossible to imagine general evacuation[of the Arab population] without compulsion, and brutal compulsion."67 Oras he wrote his son in October 1937, "We shall organize a modern defenseforce . . . and then I am certain that we will not be prevented from settlingin other parts of the country, either by mutual agreement with our Arabneighbors or by some other means."6 8 No doubt he would have preferred todo so via "mutual agreement," but Ben-Gurion understood that this was a remotepossibility and that the Zionists would need a strong army to accomplishtheir aims. Morris puts the point succinctly: "Of course, Ben-Gurionwas a transferist. He understood that there could be no Jewish state with alarge and hostile Arab minority in its midst . . . Ben-Gurion was right. If hehad not done what he did, a state would not have come into being. That hasto be clear. It is impossible to evade it. Without the uprooting of thePalestinians,a Jewish state would not have arisen here."6 9

Expulsion is a horrible and controversial strategy and it makes no sensefor any group contemplating the transfer of a rival population to announceits intentions to the world. Thus, after commenting in 1941 that he couldnot imagine how transfer could be accomplished without "brutal compulsion,"Ben-Gurion went on to say that the Zionists should not "discourageother people, British or American, who favour transfer from advocating thiscourse, but we should in no way make it part of our programme."70 He wasnot rejecting this policy, however; he was simply noting that the Zionistsshould not openly proclaim it. Further reflecting how "highly sensitive" thesubject of transfer was to Israels founding fathers, Benny Morris notes that"it was common practice in Zionist bodies to order stenographers to 'take abreak' and thus to exclude from the record discussion on such matters."Moreover, he notes that "Jewish press reports" describing how Ben-Gurionand other Zionist leaders reacted to the Peel Commission's plan for

partitioningPalestine "generally failed to mention that Ben-Gurion, or anyoneelse, had come out strongly in favor of transfer or indeed had even raised thesubject."71

The opportunity to expel the Palestinians and create a Jewish state camein 1948, when Jewish forces drove up to seven hundred thousand Palestiniansinto exile.7 2 Israelis and their supporters in the United States longclaimed that the Arabs fled because their leaders told them to, but scholarshave demolished this myth. In fact, most Arab leaders urged the Palestinianpopulation to stay home, but fear of violent death at the hands of Zionistforces led most of them to flee.7 3 After the war, Israel barred the return ofthe Palestinian exiles. As Ben-Gurion put it in June 1948, "We must prevent

at all costs their return."74 By 1962, Israel owned almost 93 percent of theland inside its borders.7 5 To achieve this outcome, 531 Arab villages weredestroyed "and eleven urban neighborhoods emptied of their inhabitants."7 6Former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan captures the catastrophethat the Zionists inflicted on the Palestinians to create the state of Israel:"Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You do not evenknow the names of these Arab villages, and I do not blame you because geographybooks no longer exist, not only do the books not exist, the Arab villagesare not there either . . . There is not a single place built in this countrythat did not have a former Arab population."77

The fact that the creation of Israel entailed a grave injustice against thePalestinian people was well understood by Israel's leaders. As Ben-Gurion

told Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, in 1956,"If I was an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural:we have taken their country. Sure, God promised it to us, but what doesthat matter to them? Our God is not theirs. We come from Israel, it's true,but two thousand years ago, and what is that to them? There has been antisemitism,the Nazis, Hitler, Auschwitz, but was that their fault? They onlysee one thing: we have come here and stolen their country. Why should theyaccept that?"7 8

Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the founding father of the Israeli right, made essentiallythe same point when he wrote in 1923, "Colonization is self-explanatory andwhat it implies is fully understood by every sensible Jew and Arab. There canonly be one purpose in colonization. For the country's Arabs that purpose isessentially unacceptable. This is a natural reaction and nothing will changeit."7 9 Berl Katznelson, a close ally of Ben-Gurion and a leading intellectualforce among the early Zionists, put the point bluntly: "The Zionist enterpriseis an enterprise of conquest."8 0

In the six decades since Israel was created, its leaders have repeatedlysought to deny the Palestinians' national ambitions.8 1 Prime Minister GoldaMeir, for example, famously remarked that "there was no such thing as aPalestinian."8 2 Many Israeli leaders also maintained a deep interest inincorporatingthe West Bank and Gaza into Israel. In 1949, for example, MosheDayan proclaimed that Israel's boundaries were "ridiculous from all pointsof view." Israel's eastern border, he felt, should be the Jordan River. Dayanwas no exception in this regard; many of his fellow generals as well as Ben-Gurion himself were keen on acquiring the West Bank for Israel.8 3 BennyMorris is certainly correct when he notes that "the vision of 'Greater Israel'as Zionism's ultimate objective did not end with the 1948 war."84

A DWINDLING MORAL CASE

After the start of the First Intifada in December 1987, some Israeli leadersbegan to countenance giving the Palestinians limited autonomy in particulareareas of the West Bank and Gaza. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, whosigned the 1993 Oslo Accords, is often said to have been willing to allow thePalestinians to have a viable state in almost all of the Occupied Territories.But this view is not correct; Rabin in fact opposed creating a full-fledgedPalestinian state. Speaking in 1995, the year that he was murdered, Rabinsaid, "I seek peaceful coexistence between Israel as a Jewish state, not allover the land of Israel, or most of it; its capital, the united Jerusalem; itssecurityborder with Jordan

rebuilt; next to it, a Palestinian entity, less than astate, that runs the life of Palestinians . . . This is my goal, not to return tothe pre—Six-Day War lines but to create two entities, a separation betweenIsrael and the Palestinians who reside in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip."8 5

The depth of Israel's opposition to creating a Palestinian state—even inthe late 1990s—is reflected in an incident involving First Lady Hillary Clinton.In the spring of 1998, Israelis and their American supporters sharplycriticized her for saying that "it would be in the long-term interests of peacein the Middle East for there to be a state of Palestine, a functioning modernstate that is on the same footing as other states." White House officials, accordingto the New York Times, immediately "disowned" her comments and"insisted that she was speaking only for herself." Her view, the White Housepress secretary said, "is not the view of the President."8 6

By 2000, however, it was finally acceptable for American politicians tospeak openly about the desirability of a Palestinian state. At the same time,pressure from extremist violence and the growing Palestinian population hasforced recent Israeli leaders to dismantle the settlements in the Gaza Stripand to explore territorial compromises involving the West Bank. Still, no Israeligovernment has been willing to offer the Palestinians a viable state oftheir own. As discussed below, even Prime Minister Ehud Barak's purportedlygenerous offer at Camp David in July 2000 would have given the Palestiniansonly a disarmed and dismembered state under de facto Israelicontrol. In 2002, former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir reiterated his oppositionto giving the Palestinians any kind of state, while former Prime MinisterBenjamin Netanyahu made it clear the following year that he favored

only a semisovereign Palestinian state.8 7

Europe's crimes against the Jews provide a strong moral justification forIsrael's right to exist. No new settler state can hope to come into existencewithout some degree of violence, but Israel has continued to impose terribleviolence and discrimination on the Palestinians for decades. These policies

can no longer be justified on the grounds that the existence of Israel is atstake. Israels survival is not in doubt, even if some Islamic extremists harborunrealistic hopes or Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that Israel"should vanish from the page of time."8 8 More important, the past sufferingof the Jewish people does not obligate the United States to help Israelno matter what it does today.

"VIRTUOUS ISRAELIS" VERSUS "EVIL ARABS"

Another moral argument portrays Israel as a country that has sought peaceat every turn and showed great and noble restraint even when provoked. TheArabs, by contrast, are said to have acted with deep wickedness and indiscriminateviolence. This narrative is endlessly repeated by Israeli leadersand by American apologists for Israel such as Alan Dershowitz and the NewRepublic editor in chief Martin Peretz. Israel, according to Peretz, adheresclosely to a doctrine called "purity of arms," which means that "everythingreasonable must be done to avoid harming civilians, even if that entails additionalrisks to Israeli soldiers." Moreover, he maintains that "Israel has foryears vacillated between responding to terror with exquisitely calibratedforce and pacifying terrorists by giving them some of what they want," whileits Arab enemies are part "of the very same terror that was launched on us onSept. II." 8 9 The IDF, according to Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert, amongothers, "is the most moral army in the world."90 This description of Israelibehavior is yet another myth, another element in what Meron Benvenisti,the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, calls Israels "sacred narrative."91

Israeli scholarship shows that the early Zionists were far from benevolenttoward the Palestinian Arabs.9 2 The Arab inhabitants did resist the Zionists'encroachments, sometimes killing Jews and destroying their homes. Butthis resistance would be expected given that the Zionists were trying to createtheir own state on Arab lands. "Were I an Arab," Ben-Gurion candidly remarkedin June 1937, "I would rebel even more vigorously, bitterly, anddesperately against the immigration that will one day turn Palestine and allits Arab residents over to Jewish rule."93 The Zionists responded vigorouslyand often

ruthlessly, and thus neither side owns the moral high ground duringthis period.

This same scholarship also reveals that the creation of Israel in 1948 involvedexplicit acts of ethnic cleansing, including executions, massacres,and rapes by Jews.9 4 Of course, Zionist leaders did not tell their troops to

murder and rape Palestinians, but they did advocate using brutal methodsto remove huge numbers of Palestinians from the land that would soon bethe new Jewish state. Consider what Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary on January1, 1948, at a time when he was involved in a series of important meetingswith other Zionist leaders about how to deal with the Palestinians intheir midst: "There is a need now for strong and brutal reaction. We need tobe accurate about timing, place and those we hit. If we accuse a family—weneed to harm them without mercy, women and children included. Otherwise,this is not an effective reaction . . . There is no need to distinguish betweenguilty and not guilty."95 It is hardly surprising that this sort of guidancefrom the Zionist leadership—Ben-Gurion was summarizing the emergingpolicy—led Jewish soldiers to commit atrocities. After all, we have seen thispattern of behavior in many wars, fought by many different peoples. Regardless,the occurrence of atrocities in this period undercuts Israels claim to aspecial moral status.

Israel's subsequent conduct toward its Arab adversaries and its Palestinian

subjects has often been severe, belying any claim to morally superiorconduct. Between 1949 and 1956, for example, Morris estimates that "Israelisecurity forces and civilian guards, and their mines and booby-traps,killed somewhere between 2,700 and 5,000 Arab infiltrators." Some of themwere undoubtedly bent on killing Israelis, but according to the available evidence,"the vast majority of those killed were unarmed; the overwhelmingmajority had infiltrated for economic or social reasons." Morris notes thatthis "free-fire" policy led to "a series of atrocities" against the infiltrators.96

These kinds of acts were not anomalous. The IDF murdered hundreds ofEgyptian prisoners of war in both the 1956 and 1967 wars.97 In 1967, it expelledbetween 100,000 and 260,000 Palestinians from the newly conqueredWest Bank and drove 80,000 Syrians from the Golan Heights.9 8 When thevictims of these ethnic cleansings tried to sneak back to their homes, oftenunarmed, Israelis sometimes shot them on sight.9 9 Amnesty Internationalestimates that between 1967 and 2003, Israel destroyed more than tenthousand homes in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.10 0 Israel was alsocomplicit in the massacre of innocent Palestinians by a Christian militia atthe Sabra and Shatila refugee camps following its invasion of Lebanon in1982. An Israeli investigatory commission found Defense Minister ArielSharon to bear "personal responsibility" for these atrocities by allowing thePhalangists to enter the camps.10 1 While the commission's willingness tohold a top official like Sharon accountable is admirable, we should notforget that Israeli voters subsequently elected him prime minister.

Israel has now controlled the West Bank and Gaza for forty years, makingit, as the historian Perry Anderson notes, "the longest official military occupationof modern history."102 When the occupation began, Benny Morrisexplains, Israelis "liked to believe, and tell the world, that they were runningan enlightened' and 'benign' occupation, qualitatively different from othermilitary occupations the world had seen. The truth was radically different.Like all occupations, Israel's was founded on brute force, repression andfear, collaboration and treachery, beatings and torture chambers, and dailyintimidation, humiliation, and manipulation."10 3 During the First Intifada(1987-91), for example, the IDF distributed truncheons to its troops andencouraged them to break the bones of Palestinian protestors. The Swedishbranch of the Save the Children organization released a thousand-page reportin May 1990 that detailed the effects of that conflict on the children inthe Occupied Territories. It estimated that "23,600 to 29,900 children requiredmedical treatment for their

beating injuries in the first two years ofthe [first] intifada." Moreover, it estimated that almost one-third of the childrenwere ten years or under; one-fifth were five and under; more than fourfifths"had been beaten on their heads and upper bodies and at multiplelocations"; and almost one-third of the children "sustained broken bones, includingmultiple fractures."10 4

Ehud Barak, the IDF s deputy chief of staff during the First Intifada, saidat the time, "We do not want children to be shot under any circumstances. . . When you see a child you don't shoot." Nevertheless, Save theChildren estimated that sixty-five hundred to eighty-five hundred childrenwere wounded by gunfire during the first two years of the Intifada. Regardingthe 106 recorded cases of "child gunshot deaths," the report concludedthat almost all of them "were hit by directed—not random or ricochet—gunfire"; almost 20 percent suffered multiple gunshot wounds; about 12percent were shot from behind; 15 percent of the children were ten years oryounger; "most children were not participating in a stone-throwing demonstrationwhen shot"; and "nearly one-fifth of the children were shot deadwhile at home or within ten meters of their homes."

Israel's response to the Second Intifada (2000-05) was even more violent,leading the Israeli newspaper Haaretz to declare that "the IDF .. . isturning into a killing machine whose efficiency is awe-inspiring, yet shocking."10 5 The IDF fired one million bullets in the first days of the uprising,which is hardly a measured response.10 6 Over the course of that uprising, Israelkilled 3,386 Palestinians, while 992 Israelis were killed by the Palestinians,which means that Israel killed 3.4 Palestinians for every Israeli lost.

Among those killed were 676 Palestinian children and 118 Israeli children;thus, the ratio of Palestinian to Israeli children killed was 5.7 to 1. Of the3,386 Palestinian deaths, 1,815 were believed to be bystanders, 1,008 werekilled while fighting the Israelis, and the circumstances of 563 deaths areunknown. In other words, well over half of the Palestinian fatalities appearto have been noncombatants. A similar pattern holds on the Israeli side,where 683 of its 992 deaths were civilians; the remaining 309 were military.107 Israeli forces have also killed several foreign peace activists, includinga twenty-three-year-old American woman crushed by an Israeli bulldozerin March 2003. 10 8 Yet the Israeli government rarely investigates these civiliandeaths, much less punishes the perpetrators.10 9

These facts about Israel's conduct have been amply documented by numeroushuman rights organizations—including prominent Israeli groups—and are not disputed by fair-minded observers.11 0 And that is why fourformer officials of Shin Bet (the Israeli domestic security organization) condemnedIsrael's conduct during the Second Intifada in November 2003.One of them declared, "We are behaving disgracefully," and another termedIsrael's conduct "patently immoral."11 1

A similar pattern can be seen in Israel's response to the escalation in violencein Gaza and Lebanon in 2006. The killing of two Israeli soldiers andthe capture of a third by Hamas in June 2006 led Israel to reoccupy Gazaand launch air strikes and artillery fire that destroyed critical infrastructure,including the electric power station that provided residents of Gaza withhalf of their electricity. The IDF has also killed hundreds of Palestinianssince moving back into Gaza, many of them children.11 2 This dire situationled the UN high commissioner for human rights, Louise Arbour, to proclaimin November 2006 that "the violation of human rights in this territory .. . ismassive."11 3 Likewise, when Hezbollah units crossed the Israeli-Lebaneseborder in July 2006 and captured two IDF soldiers and killed several more,Israel unleashed a bombing campaign that was designed to inflict massivepunishment on Lebanon's civilian population by destroying critical infrastructurelike roads, bridges, gas stations, and buildings. More than onethousand Lebanese died, most of them innocent civilians. As discussed inChapter 11, this response was both strategically foolish and a violation ofthe laws of war. In short, there is little basis for the often-heard claim thatIsrael has consistently shown great restraint in dealing with its adversaries.

An obvious challenge to this point is the claim that Israel has faced amortal threat throughout its history, both from "rejectionist" Arab governmentsand from Palestinian terrorists. Isn't Israel entitled to do whatever it

takes to protect its citizens? And doesn't the unique evil of terrorism justifycontinued U.S. support, even if Israel often responds harshly?

In fact, this argument is not a compelling moral justification either.Palestinians have used terrorism against their Israeli occupiers as well as innocentthird parties; their willingness to attack civilians is wrong and shouldbe roundly condemned. This behavior is not surprising, however, becausethe Palestinians have long been denied basic political rights and believe theyhave no other way to force Israeli concessions. As former Prime MinisterBarak once admitted, had he been born a Palestinian, he "would have joineda terrorist organization."11 4 If the situation were reversed and the Israeliswere under Arab occupation, they would almost certainly be using similartactics against their oppressors, just as other resistance movements aroundthe world have done.11 5

Indeed, terrorism was one of the key tactics that the Zionists used whenthey were in a similarly weak position and trying to obtain their own state. Itwas Jewish terrorists from the infamous Irgun, a militant Zionist group, whoin late 1937 introduced into Palestine the now-familiar practice of placingbombs in buses and large crowds. Benny Morris speculates that "the Arabsmay well have learned the value of terrorist bombings from the Jews."11 6 Between1944 and 1947, several Zionist organizations used terrorist attacks todrive the British from Palestine and took the lives of many innocent civilians

along the way.11 7 Israeli terrorists also murdered the UN mediator CountFolke Bernadotte in 1948, because they opposed his proposal to internationalizeJerusalem.11 8 The perpetrators of these acts were not isolated extremists:the leaders of the murder plot were eventually granted amnesty by theIsraeli government and one of them was later elected to the Knesset. Anotherterrorist leader, who approved of Bernadotte's murder but was not tried, wasfuture Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. He openly argued that "neither Jewishethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat."Rather, terrorism had "a great part to play .. . in our war against the occupier[Britain]." Nor did Shamir express regrets about his terrorist past, telling aninterviewer in 1998 that "had I not acted as I did, it is doubtful that we wouldhave been able to create an independent Jewish state of our own."11 9

Of course, Menachem Begin, who headed the Irgun and later becameprime minister, was one of the most prominent Jewish terrorists in the yearsbefore Israeli independence. When speaking of Begin, Prime Minister LeviEshkol often referred to him simply as "the terrorist."120 The Palestinians'use of terrorism is morally reprehensible today, but so was the Zionists' re

liance on it in the past. Thus, one cannot justify American support for Israelon the grounds that its past or present conduct was morally superior.

Another possible line of defense is that Israel does not purposely targetnoncombatants, while Hezbollah and the Palestinians do aim to kill Israelicivilians. Moreover, the terrorists who strike at Israel use civilians as humanshields, which regrettably leaves the IDF no choice but to kill innocent civilianswhen it strikes at its deadly foes. These rationales are not convincing either.As discussed in Chapter 11, the IDF targeted civilian areas in Lebanon,and there is little evidence that Hezbollah was using civilians as humanshields. While there is also no evidence that it has been official Israeli policyto kill Palestinian civilians, the IDF has often failed to take care to avoidciviliancasualties when fighting against groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad.The fact that Hezbollah and the Palestinians target civilians does not entitleIsrael to jeopardize civilian lives by using disproportionate force.

There is no question that Israel is justified in responding with force to violentacts by groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, but its

willingness to use itssuperior military power to inflict massive suffering on innocent civilianscasts doubt on its repeated claims to a special moral status. Israel may nothave acted worse than many other countries, but it has not acted any better.

CAMP DAVID MYTHS

The portrayal of Israel as primed for peace and the Palestinians as bent onwar is reinforced by the standard interpretation of the Clinton administration'sfailed effort to complete the Oslo peace process. According to thisstory, Prime Minister Barak offered the Palestinians "almost everything"they wanted at Camp David in July 2000. 12 1 But Arafat, still determined toderail the peace process and eventually destroy Israel, rejected this generousoffer and instead launched the Second Intifada in late September 2000. Israelaccepted and Arafat rejected an even more generous proposal—the socalledClinton parameters—put forth by President Clinton on December 23,2000, providing further evidence that he had no interest in peace.

In this story, the failure of the peace process was almost entirely Arafat'sfault. Israel was eager to make peace but could not find a reliable partner,confirming Abba Eban's famous quip that "the Arabs never miss an opportunityto miss an opportunity." This account also implies that neither Israelnor the United States bears responsibility for the continued conflict and bol

sters the argument that Israel was correct in refusing to make concessions tothe Palestinians as long as Arafat was in charge.

There is only one problem with this widely held version of events: it isnot correct.12 2 Although Barak deserves credit for being the first —indeed,the only—Israeli leader to offer the Palestinians their own state, the termshe offered them at Camp David were far from generous. To start, it seemsclear that Barak's best offer at Camp David promised the Palestinians immediatecontrol of Gaza and eventual control of 91 percent of the West Bank.12 3Even so, there were major problems with this offer from the Palestinians'perspective. Israel planned to keep control of the Jordan River Valley(roughly 10 percent of the West Bank) for between six and twenty-one years(different accounts of the negotiations vary on this point), which meantthat the Palestinians would be given immediate control over no more than81 percent of the West Bank, not 91 percent. The Palestinians, of course,could not be sure that Israel would ever relinquish control of the JordanRiver Valley

In addition, the Palestinians had a slightly more expansive definition ofwhat constituted the West Bank than the Israelis did. This difference, whichamounted to roughly 5 percent of the territory in question, meant that thePalestinians saw themselves immediately getting 76 percent of the WestBank and, if the Israelis were willing to surrender the Jordan River Valley atsome future date, maybe 86 percent. What made this deal especially difficultfor the Palestinians to accept was the fact that they had already agreedin the 1993 Oslo Accords to recognize Israeli sovereignty over 78 percent ofthe original British Mandate.12 4 From their perspective, they were now beingasked to make another major concession and accept at best 86 percentof the remaining 22 percent.

To make matters worse, the final Israeli proposal at Camp David in thesummer of 2000 would not have given the Palestinians a continuous pieceof sovereign territory in the West Bank. The Palestinians maintain that theWest Bank would have been divided into three cantons separated by Israeliterritory. Israelis dispute this claim, but Barak himself acknowledges that Israelwould have maintained control of a "razor-thin" wedge of territory runningfrom Jerusalem to the Jordan River Valley.125 This wedge, which wouldcompletely bisect the West Bank, was essential to Israel's plan to retain controlof the Jordan River Valley. Thus, the Palestinian state proposed at CampDavid would have been composed of either two or three distinct cantons inthe West Bank, and Gaza, which is itself separated from the West Bank byIsraeli territory. Barak later said that the Palestinian areas on the West Bank

could have been connected by "a tunnel or bridge," while Gaza and the WestBank would have been connected by a travel corridor.126

With regard to the thorny issue of Jerusalem, Barak's proposal to dividethe city was a major step in the right direction. Nonetheless, the Palestinianswere not offered full sovereignty in a number of Arab neighborhoods inEast Jerusalem, which made the proposal significantly less attractive tothem. Israel would also have kept control over the new Palestinian state'sborders, its airspace, and its water resources, and the Palestinians would bepermanently barred from building an army to defend themselves.127 It ishard to imagine any leader accepting these terms. Certainly no other state inthe world has such curtailed sovereignty, or faces so many obstacles to buildinga workable economy and society. Given all this, it is not surprising thatBarak's former foreign minister, Shlomo Ben-Ami, who was a key participantat Camp David, later told an interviewer, "If I were a Palestinian I wouldhave rejected Camp David, as well."128

The common claim that Arafat launched the Second Intifada in late September2000—either to enhance his leverage in the negotiations or to destroythe peace process itself—does not stand up against the evidenceeither.129 He continued negotiating with the Israelis and the Americans afterCamp David, and he even visited Prime Minister Ehud Barak's home afew nights before the violence broke out. According to Charles Enderlin, aFrench journalist who has written an important book on the failure of thesenegotiations, the two leaders were uncharacteristically friendly and optimisticabout the negotiations that evening.130 Moreover, the former head ofShin Bet, Ami Ayalon, has stated that "Arafat neither prepared nor triggered

the Intifada."131 The so-called Mitchell Commission, headed by former U.S.Senator George Mitchell and charged with restarting the peace process,reached the same conclusion.13 2

The Second Intifada broke out shortly after Ariel Sharon visited the TempleMount, Judaism's most holy site, on September 28, 2000. He had to beaccompanied by more than a thousand Israeli police, because Muslims considerthat same site, the location of the al-Aqsa Mosque, to be the third holiestsite in Islam. But Sharon's provocative move was only the precipitatingcause, not the root cause, of the violence. Trouble had been brewing amongthe Palestinians well before Sharon's visit, and key individuals on both sidesrecognized the danger. In fact, Palestinian leaders asked American and Israeliofficials to bar Sharon's visit precisely because they anticipated a violentreaction and wanted to prevent it.13 3

Part of the problem was the Palestinians' growing dissatisfaction with

Arafat, whose corrupt leadership had done little to improve their lives, muchless deliver a state. But the main cause was Israel's provocative policies inthe Occupied Territories, compounded by its harsh response to the demonstrationsthat immediately followed Sharon's visit.13 4 Ben-Ami is exactlyright that the Second Intifada "did not start merely as a tactical move. Iterupted out of the accumulated rage and frustration of the Palestinianmasses at the colossal failure of the peace process since the early days ofOslo to offer them a life of dignity and well-being, and at the incompetenceand corruption of their own leaders in the Palestinian Authority."135

The Palestinians' frustrations are not hard to fathom. Between the start ofthe Oslo peace process in September 1993 and the outbreak of the SecondIntifada seven years later, Israel confiscated more than forty thousand acresof Palestinian land, built 250 miles of bypass and security roads, establishedthirty new settlements, and increased the settler population in the West Bankand Gaza by almost one hundred thousand, which effectively doubled thatpopulation.136 The Israelis also reneged on promises to transfer territory backto the Palestinians and created a system of checkpoints that sharply reducedthe Palestinians' freedom of movement and badly damaged their economy.The Palestinians were primed to explode by 2000, and when they did, the Israelisunleashed their superior firepower with scant

restraint.137 The IDF, asnoted, fired more than a million bullets in the first few days of the uprising.

Although Arafat did not launch the Second Intifada, he exploited the resultingviolence in a foolish attempt to enhance his bargaining position. Notonly did this move make Barak less willing to cut a deal, but it also damagedBarak's standing with the Israeli electorate and paved the way for Sharon'selection in February 2001. Arafat's attempt to leverage the uprising also delayedthe negotiations, which meant that the lame-duck Clinton administrationhad even less time in which to complete the process.

Some argue that Arafat's ultimate goal in manipulating the violence wasto erase Israel from the map. That was certainly his goal when he firstemerged on the world stage in the 1960s, but he recognized by the late1980s that there was no way that the Palestinians could make Israel go away.Arafat went to some lengths in the 1990s—certainly by participating in theOslo peace process—to make clear that he accepted Israel's existence andthat his struggle with Israel was over control of the Occupied Territories, notall of historic Palestine.13 8 When Camp David failed and the Second Intifadabegan, almost all of Israel's key intelligence figures believed thatArafat accepted Israels existence and merely sought a Palestinian state inthe West Bank and Gaza.13 9 Furthermore, as the Middle East specialist Jeremy

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Pressman points out, if Arafat and the Palestinians were determined to eliminateIsrael, they would have accepted Barak's offer and used the new stateas "a launching pad for the elimination of Israel." But instead they negotiated"as if they expected to abide by any agreements and live for the longterm within the framework of a two-state solution."14 0

Finally, the oft-repeated claim that Arafat rejected the December 2000Clinton parameters, which did improve on Barak's last offer at Camp David,is also wrong. The official Palestinian response thanked Clinton for his continuedefforts, declared that considerable progress had been made, asked forclarification on some points, and expressed reservations about others.14 1 TheIsraeli government also had its own reservations about the proposal, whichBarak outlined in a twenty-page single-spaced document. Thus, both thePalestinians and the Israelis accepted the Clinton parameters and saw themas the basis for continued negotiation, but neither side accepted them in toto.The White House spokesman Jake Siewert made just this point on January 3,2001, when he said that "both sides have now accepted the President's ideaswith some reservations," and Clinton confirmed this point in a speech to theIsrael Policy Forum four days later.14 2 Negotiations between Israelis andPalestinians continued at Taba, Egypt, until late January 2001, when EhudBarak, not Arafat, broke off the talks. With elections in Israel imminent andpublic opinion there running strongly against the talks, Barak felt that theclock had run out on him.14 3 His successor, Ariel Sharon, who was adamantlyopposed to the Oslo peace process as well as the Clinton parameters,refused to resume negotiations despite repeated Palestinian requests.We will never know if peace was within sight by early 2001, but the chargethat Arafat and the Palestinians rejected a last chance for peace and choseviolence over reconciliation is false.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL IS GOD'S WILL

There is a final moral claim that some say justifies the close embrace betweenthe United States and Israel. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 4,some evangelical Christians—especially so-called Christian Zionists—viewthe establishment of the Jewish state as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.Genesis says that God gave Abraham and his descendants the land of Israel;by colonizing the West Bank, Jews are merely taking back what God gavethem. Some Christians also see the creation of a greater Israel as a key eventleading to the end-time "final battle" depicted in the New Testament's Book

of Revelation. Both perspectives imply that Israel deserves U.S. support notbecause it is a democracy, an underdog, or a morally superior society, but becausebacking Israel is God's will.

This line of argument undoubtedly appeals to some fervently religiousindividuals, but anticipating Armageddon is not a sound basis for makingAmerican foreign policy. Church and state are separate in

the United States,and the religious opinions of any group are not supposed to determine thecountry's foreign policy. It is also an odd reading of Christian ethics to supportthe powerful Israeli state in its mistreatment of dispossessed Palestiniansand its suppression of their rights.

WHAT DO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT?

The six moral arguments that we have just examined underpin the broaderclaim that the real basis of U.S. support for Israel is the American people'senduring identification with the Jewish state. The columnist Jeff Jacoby ofthe Boston Globe writes that "solidarity with Israel is an abiding feature ofAmerican public opinion. Because the American people are pro-Israel, theAmerican government is pro-Israel. And because Americans so strongly supportIsrael in its conflict with the Arabs, American policy in the Middle Eastis committed to Israel's defense." As the AIPAC spokesman Josh Block saidon the eve of its 2007 Policy Conference, "There's one issue—that is, supportfor the U.S. relationship with Israel—that brings everyone together." Infact, he argued that "all trends indicate that Americans . . . understand quiteclearly that the basic values we celebrate are reflected in only one country inthe Middle East—our ally Israel."14 4

This claim, however widely believed, does not stand up to close inspection.There is a degree of cultural affinity between the United States and Israel,based in part on the shared Judeo-Christian tradition. There is also noquestion that many Americans look favorably on Israel because it is a democracy,because of the history of anti-Semitism, and because they sympathize

with Israel in its fight against Palestinian terrorism. But the common rootsof Judaism and Christianity have hardly been a reliable source of amity betweenJews and Christians in the past.14 5 Not only have Christians waged brutalwars against each other, but they have also been the primary perpetratorsof violent anti-Semitism in previous centuries. And some fundamentalists—including Christian Zionists—still regard the conversion of Jews as an importantevangelical objective. By itself, therefore, this "cultural affinity" cannot

account for the consistent level of U.S. support, or even the generally favorableattitudes that many Americans express toward the Jewish state.

As will become clear in later chapters, the American people are inclinedto support Israel in part because its supporters in the United States cultivatesympathy by stifling criticism of Israel while simultaneously portraying it ina favorable light. Indeed, there is much more criticism of Israels actions inIsrael itself than there is in America. If there were a more open and candiddiscussion about what the Israelis are doing in the Occupied Territories, andabout the real strategic value of Israel as a U.S. ally, there would be muchless sympathy for Israel in the American public.

Nonetheless, the degree of public support for Israel—and for specific Israelipolicies—should not be overstated. Although the American peoplehave favorable perceptions of Israel and clearly support the existence of aJewish state, support for Israel is not especially deep. Most Americans alsorecognize that the United States pays a price for its unyielding support of Israel.For example, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press hasbeen asking Americans for many years whether they sympathize more withIsrael or the Palestinians. There has always been much more sympathy forIsrael, but from 1993 through 2006, the number went above 50 percent onlyonce—it was 52 percent during the second Lebanon war in 2006—and wasas low as 37 percent in July 2005. 14 6

Regarding the consequences of U.S. support for Israel, a Pew surveyconducted in November 2005 found that 39 percent of the American publicsaid that it was "a major cause of global discontent." Among opinion leaders,the numbers were substantially higher. Indeed, 78 percent of membersof the news media, 72 percent of military leaders, 72 percent of security experts,and 69 percent of foreign affairs specialists believe that backing Israelseriously damages America's

image around the world.14 7 A Newsweek poll releaseda few weeks after the September 11 attacks found that 58 percent ofthe respondents believed that U.S. support for Israel was a factor in Osamabin Laden's decision to attack America.14 8

The American people are considerably more critical of some Israeli actionsthan U.S. politicians are, and the public clearly supports taking a hardnosedapproach to dealing with Israel when they think it is in the nationalinterest to do so. As we explain in Chapter 7, a survey in the spring of 2003showed that 60 percent of Americans were willing to withhold aid to Israelif it resisted U.S. pressure to settle its conflict with the Palestinians. In fact,73 percent said the United States should not favor either side in the conflict.14 9 Two years later, the Anti-Defamation League found that 78 percent

of Americans believed that Washington should favor neither Israel nor thePalestinians.15 0 Andrew Kohut, the director of the Pew Research Center forthe People and the Press, points out that "average Americans see shades ofgray in the Middle East conflict, and their sympathies notwithstanding, theyfavor a neutral role for the United States."15 1

Unlike their leaders, the American people displayed a tough-minded approachto dealing with Israel during the Lebanon war in 2006. As discussedin Chapter 11, polls showed that slightly more than half of the publicthought that Israel was either equally responsible or mainly responsible forthe war, and in at least two polls more than half of the respondents said thatthe United States should not take sides.15 2 But the United States emphaticallytook Israel's side in Lebanon, as it has in every recent conflict involving

Israel. This enthusiastic and unconditional support cannot be explained bythe generally favorable opinion of Israel held by most Americans.

CONCLUSION

The moral or strategic arguments commonly invoked by Israel's backers cannotaccount for America's remarkable relationship with the Jewish state overthe past three decades. This is especially true for the post—Cold War period,when the strategic rationale largely evaporated and the moral rationale wasbadly undermined by Israeli behavior in the Occupied Territories. Yet therelationshipcontinued to grow and deepen.

Some Americans surely do not find this situation anomalous, as they sincerelybelieve that there are powerful moral and strategic reasons behind

U.S. support for Israel. Because the essential facts in this story are so atodds with this perspective, it is hard to imagine that the number of true believersis large enough to account for America's exceptional relationship withthe Jewish state. We are left with a puzzle: either a relatively small numberof true believers are exerting a disproportionate influence on U.S. foreignpolicy, or they have managed to persuade lots of other people—especiallykey politicians and policy makers—that these flawed rationales are in factcorrect. Because the strategic and moral case is increasingly weak, somethingelse must be behind the striking pattern of ever-increasing U.S. support.We address that issue in the next chapter.

4

WHAT IS THE "ISRAEL LOBBY"?

In the United States, interest groups routinely contend to shape perceptionsof the national interest and to convince legislators and presidents to adopttheir preferred policies. The interplay of competing factions was famouslyextolled by James Madison in the Federalist No. 10, and the influence of differentinterest groups has long shaped various aspects of American foreignpolicy, including decisions for war.

When a particular interest group is especially powerful or politicallyadept, it may influence policy in ways that are not good for the country as awhole. A tariff that shields a particular industry from foreign competitionwill benefit certain companies but not the many

consumers who have to paymore for that industry's goods. The National Rifle Association's success inthwarting gun control legislation undoubtedly benefits gun manufacturersand dealers, but it leaves the rest of society more vulnerable to gun-relatedviolence. When a former lobbyist for the American Petroleum Institute becomeschief of staff at the White House's Council on Environmental Quality,and uses this position to water down reports on the connection betweengreenhouse gas emissions and global warming (before resigning to take a jobat ExxonMobil), one may reasonably worry that the oil industry is protectingits interests in ways that may harm all of us.1

The influence of the Israel lobby on U.S. foreign policy merits the samescrutiny as the impact of energy interests on environmental regulations orthe role of pharmaceutical companies in shaping policy on prescriptiondrugs. We believe the activities of the groups and individuals who make upthe lobby are the main reason why the United States pursues policies in theMiddle East that make little sense on either strategic or moral grounds.

Were it not for the lobby's efforts, the strategic and moral arguments that arecommonly invoked to justify unconditional American support would becalled into question more frequently and U.S. policy in the Middle Eastwould be significantly different than it is today. Pro-Israel forces surely believethat they are promoting policies that serve the American as well as theIsraeli national interest. We disagree. Most of the policies they advocate arenot in America's or Israel's interest, and both countries would be better off if

the United States adopted a different approach.

As we have already noted, we are not questioning American support forIsrael's right to exist, because that right is clearly justified and is now endorsedby more than 160 countries around the world. What we are questioning—and what needs to be explained—is the magnitude of U.S. support forIsrael and its largely unconditional nature (as described in Chapter 1), aswell as the degree to which U.S. Middle East policy is conducted with Israel'swelfare in mind (as explored in detail in Part II). To begin that task,this chapter identifies the central components of the Israel lobby and describeshow it has evolved over time. We also discuss why it has become soinfluential, especially when compared to potential competitors like the"Arab lobby" and the "oil lobby." The following chapters describe the differentstrategies that have made it such a powerful interest group and a remarkablyeffective player in the making of U.S. Middle East policy.

DEFINING THE LOBBY

We use "Israel lobby" as a convenient shorthand term for the loose coalitionof individuals and organizations that actively work to shape U.S. foreign policyin a pro-Israel direction. The lobby is not a single, unified movementwith a central leadership, however, and the individuals and groups thatmake up this broad coalition sometimes disagree on specific policy issues.Nor is it some sort of cabal or conspiracy. On the contrary, the organizationsand individuals who make up the lobby operate out in the open and in thesame way that other interest groups do.

Using the term "Israel lobby" is itself somewhat misleading, insofar asmany of the individuals and some of the groups in this loose coalition do notengage in formal lobbying activities (direct efforts to persuade elected officials).Rather, the various parts of the lobby work to influence U.S. policy ina variety of ways, much as other interest groups do. One might more accuratelydub this the "pro-Israel community" or even the "help Israel move

ment," because the range of activities that different groups undertake goesbeyond simple lobbying. Nonetheless, because many of the key groups dolobby, and because the term "Israel lobby" is used in common parlance(along with labels such as the "farm lobby," "insurance lobby," "gun lobby," orother ethnic lobbies), we have

chosen to employ it here.2

As with other special interest groups, the boundaries of the Israel lobbycannot be identified precisely, and there will always be some borderline individualsor organizations whose position is hard to classify.3 It is easy toidentify groups that are clearly part of the lobby —such as the Zionist Organizationof America (ZOA)—as well as individuals who are key members—such as Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference ofPresidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. There are also manygroups that are obviously not part of the lobby—such as the National Associationof Arab-Americans—and individuals who should clearly be excludedas well—such as Columbia University scholar Rashid Khalidi. Nevertheless,there will always be some groups and individuals whose position ismore ambiguous. Like other social and political movements, the Israellobby's boundaries are somewhat fuzzy.

This situation highlights that the lobby is not a centralized, hierarchicalorganization with a defined membership. There are no membership cards orinitiation rites. It has a core consisting of organizations whose declared purposeis to encourage the U.S. government and the American public to providematerial aid to Israel and to support its government's policies, as well asinfluential individuals for whom these goals are also a top priority. The lobby,however, also draws support from a penumbra of groups and individuals whoare committed to Israel and want the United States to continue supportingit, but who are not as energetically or consistently active as the groups andindividuals that form the core. Thus, a lobbyist for the American Israel PublicAffairs Committee (AIPAC), a research fellow at the Washington Institutefor Near East Policy (WINEP), or the leadership of organizations likethe Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and Christians United for Israel

(CUFI) are part of the core, while individuals who occasionally write letterssupporting Israel to their local newspaper or send checks to a pro-Israel politicalaction committee should be seen as part of the broader network ofsupporters.

This definition does not mean that every American with favorable attitudestoward Israel is a member of the lobby. To offer a personal illustration,the authors of this book are "pro-Israel," in the sense that we support itsright to exist, admire its many achievements, want its citizens to enjoy se

cure and prosperous lives, and believe that the United States should cometo Israel's aid if its survival is in danger. But we are obviously not part of theIsrael lobby. Nor does it imply that every American officiai who supports Israelis part of the lobby either. A senator who consistently votes in favor ofaid to Israel is not necessarily part of the lobby, because he or she may simplybe responding to political pressure from pro-Israel interest groups.

To be part of the lobby, in other words, one has to actively work to moveAmerican foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction. For an organization, thispursuit must be an important part of its mission and consume a substantialpercentage of its resources and agenda. For an individual, this means devotingsome portion of one's professional or personal life (or in some cases, substantialamounts of money) to influencing U.S. Middle East policy. A journalistor academic who sometimes covers Middle East issues and occasionallyreports events that portray Israel favorably—such as the New York Times reporterDavid Sanger or the Duke University professor Bruce Jentleson—should not be seen as part of the lobby. But a journalist or scholar whopredictably takes Israel's side and devotes a significant amount of his or herwriting to defending steadfast U.S. support for Israel—such as the WashingtonPost columnist Charles Krauthammer or the former Princeton Universityhistorian Bernard Lewis—clearly is.

Of course, the level of effort and the specific activities will vary in eachcase, and these various groups and individuals will not agree on every issuethat affects Israel. Some individuals—such as Morton Klein of ZOA, JohnHagee of CUFI, and Rael Jean Isaac of Americans for a Safe Israel—opposea two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians and believe insteadthat Israel should retain all or most of the Occupied Territories. Others,such as Dennis Ross of WINEP and Martin Indyk of the Brookings Institution,favor a negotiated

settlement and have occasionally criticized specificIsraeli actions. Despite these differences, however, each of these individualsbelieves that the United States should give Israel substantial diplomatic,economic, and military support even when Israel takes actions the UnitedStates opposes, and each has devoted a significant amount of his or her professionallife to encouraging this sort of support. Thus, although it wouldclearly be wrong to think of the lobby as a single-minded monolith, muchless portray it as a cabal or conspiracy, it would be equally mistaken to excludeanyone who works actively to preserve America's special relationshipwith the Jewish state.

WHAT IS THE "ISRAEL LOBBY"?

THE ROLE OF AMERICAN JEWRY

The bulk of the lobby is comprised of Jewish Americans who are deeplycommitted to making sure that U.S. foreign policy advances what they believeto be Israel's interests. According to the historian Melvin I. Urofsky, "Noother ethnic group in American history has so extensive an involvement witha foreign nation." Steven T. Rosenthal agrees, writing that "since 1967 . . .there has been no other country whose citizens have been as committed tothe success of another country as American Jews have been to Israel."4 In1981, the political scientist Robert H. Trice described the pro-Israel lobbyas "comprised of at least 75 separate organizations—mostly Jewish—thatactively support most of the actions and policy positions of the Israeli government."5 The activities of these groups and individuals go beyond merelyvoting for pro-Israel candidates to include writing letters to politicians or

news organizations, making financial contributions to pro-Israel politicalcandidates, and giving active support to one or more pro-Israel organizations,whose leaders often contact them directly to convey their agenda.

Yet the Israel lobby is not synonymous with American Jewry, and "Jewishlobby" is not an appropriate term for describing the various individuals andgroups that work to foster U.S. support for Israel. For one thing, there issignificantvariation among American Jews in their depth of commitment toIsrael. Roughly a third of them, in fact, do not identify Israel as a particularlysalient issue. In 2004, for example, a well-regarded survey found that36 percent of Jewish Americans were either "not very" or "not at all" emotionallyattached to Israel.6 Furthermore, many American Jews who care alot about Israel do not support the policies endorsed by the dominant organizationsin the lobby, just as many gun owners do not support every policythat the NRA advocates and not all retirees favor every position endorsed bythe AARR For example, American Jews were less enthusiastic about goingto war in Iraq than the population as a whole, even though key organizationsin the lobby supported the war, and they are more opposed to the war today.Finally, some of the individuals and groups that are especially vocal on Israel'sbehalf, such as the Christian Zionists, are not Jewish. So while AmericanJews are the lobby's predominant constituency, it is more accurate torefer to this loose coalition as the Israel lobby. It is the specific politicalagenda that defines the lobby, not the religious or ethnic identity of thosepushing it.

The attachment that many American Jews feel for Israel is not difficultto understand, and as noted in the Introduction, it resembles the attitudes

of other ethnic groups that retain an affinity for other countries or peopleswith similar backgrounds in foreign lands.7 Although many Jews in theUnited States were ambivalent about Zionism during the movement's earlyyears, support grew significantly after Hitler came to power in 1933 and especiallyafter the horrors inflicted on the Jews during World War II becamewidely known.8

Relatively few Jews chose to leave the United States and move to Israelafter its founding in 1948, a pattern that Prime Minister David Ben-Gurionand other Israeli leaders initially criticized. Nevertheless, a strong commitmentto Israel soon became an important element of

identity for many AmericanJews.9 The establishment of a Jewish state in historic Palestine seemedmiraculous in itself, especially in the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust. Israel'sachievements in "making the desert bloom" were an obvious source ofpride, and a close identification with Israel provided a new basis for communityfor a population that was rapidly assimilating into American society andbecoming increasingly secular at the same time. As Rosenthal notes:

To equate Israel with Judaism was a comforting way to avoid the encumbrancesof religion by focusing one's Jewishness on a secularstate 8,000 miles from home . . . Synagogues, the new mainstay ofAmerican Jewish life in the postwar era, became Israel-centered. Anew class of Jewish professionals . . . arose in the suburbs. They soondiscovered that Israel was the most effective means to counter thegrowing religious indifference of their constituencies. Primarily inresponse to Israel's overwhelming need for financial and political support,new institutions . . . arose, and fundraising and lobbying increasinglydefined American Jews' relationship to Israel.1 0

American Jews have formed an impressive array of civic organizationswhose agendas include working to benefit Israel, in many cases by influencingU.S. foreign policy. Key organizations include AIPAC, the American JewishCongress, ZOA, the Israel Policy Forum (IPF), the American JewishCommittee, the ADL, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism,Americans for a Safe Israel, American Friends of Likud, Mercaz-USA,Hadassah, and many others. Indeed, the sociologist Chaim I. Waxman reportedin 1992 that the American Jewish Yearbook listed more than eighty nationalJewish organizations "specifically devoted to Zionist and pro-Israelactivities . . . and for many others, objectives and activities such as promotes

Israel's welfare,' 'support for the State of Israel' and promotes understandingof Israel' appear with impressive frequency."11 Fifty-one of the largest andmost important organizations come together in the Conference of Presidentsof Major American Jewish Organizations, whose self-described missionincludes "forging diverse groups into a unified force for Israel'swell-being" and working to "strengthen and foster the special U.S.-Israelrelationship."12

The lobby also includes think tanks such as the Jewish Institute forNational Security Affairs (JINSA), the Middle East Forum (MEF), andWINEP, as well as individuals who work in universities and other researchorganizations. There are also dozens of pro-Israel PAC s ready to funnelmoney to pro-Israel political candidates or to candidates whose opponentsare deemed either insufficiently supportive of or hostile to Israel. The Centerfor Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan research group that tracks campaigncontributions, has identified roughly three dozen such "pro-Israel"PACs (many of them "stealth PACs" whose names do not reveal a pro-Israelorientation) and reports that these organizations contributed approximately$3 million to congressional candidates in the 2006 midterm election.1 3

Of the various Jewish organizations that include foreign policy as a centralpart of their agenda, AIPAC is clearly the most important and bestknown. In 1997, when Fortune magazine asked members of Congress andtheir staffs to list the most powerful lobbies in Washington, AIPAC came insecond behind AARP but ahead of heavyweight lobbies like the AFL-CIOand the NRA.14 A National Journal study in March 2005 reached a similarconclusion, placing AIPAC in second place (tied with AARP) in Washington's"muscle rankings."15 Former Congressman Mervyn Dymally (D-CA)once called AIPAC "without question the most effective lobby in Congress,"and the former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, LeeHamilton, who served in Congress for thirty-four years, said in 1991, "There'sno lobby group that matches it. . . They're in a class by themselves."16

The influence that groups like AIPAC now enjoy did not emergeovernight. During Zionism's early years, and even after Israel's founding, lobbyingon Israel's behalf tended to occur quietly behind the scenes and usuallydepended on personal contacts between influential government officials, especiallythe president, and a small number of Jewish leaders, pro-Zionist advisers,or Jewish friends. For

example, Woodrow Wilson's support for theBalfour Declaration in 1917 was due in part to the influence of his Jewishfriends Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis and Rabbi Stephen Wise.

Similarly, Harry S. Truman's decision to back Israel's creation and to recognizethe new state was influenced (though not determined) by intercessionsfrom Jewish friends and advisers.17

The tendency for Israel's supporters to keep a low profile reflected concernsabout lingering anti-Semitism in the United States, as well as the fearthat overt lobbying on Israel's behalf would expose American Jews to thecharge of dual loyalty. AIPAC itself had explicitly Zionist roots: its founder,

I. L. "Si" Kenen, was head of the American Zionist Council in 1951, whichwas a registered foreign lobbying group. Kenen reorganized it as a U.S. lobbyingorganization—the American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs—in1953-54, and the new organization was renamed AIPAC in 1959. Kenen reliedon personal contacts with key legislators rather than public campaignsor mass mobilization, and AIPAC generally followed "Kenen's Rules" to advanceIsrael's cause. Rule No. 1 was: "Get behind legislation; don't step outin front of it (that is, keep a low profile)."18According to J. J. Goldberg, the editor of the Jewish newspaper Forward,Zionist influence "increased exponentially during the Kennedy and Johnsonadministrations, because the affluence and influence of Jews in Americansociety had increased," and also because Kennedy and Johnson "countednumerous Jews among their close advisers, donors and personal friends."19

AIPAC was still a small operation with a modest staff and budget, and asStuart Eizenstat points out, "Not until the mid-1960s did overt organizedJewish political activity on behalf of the state of Israel come into its own."20

The lobby's size, wealth, and influence grew substantially after the Six-Day War in June 1967. According to Eizenstat, that conflict "galvanized theAmerican Jewish public like no event since Israel's War of Independence . . .The sense of pride in new Jews,' proud, strong, capable of defending themselves,had an incalculable effect on American Jewry." The successful campaignagainst anti-Semitism, aided by the widespread awareness of thehorrors of the Holocaust, helped remove lingering discriminatory barriers,and Jewish Americans "lost the sense of fear that had stunted their politicalwill" in earlier years. And because Israel was becoming a central focus of Jewishidentity in a world where assimilation was increasingly viable and widespread,there were few reasons not to express that attachment in politics.21

The heightened concern with Israel's well-being within Jewish organizationscontinued during the War of Attrition (1969-70) and the October War(1973). These conflicts reinforced pride in Israel's military prowess, but theyalso raised fears about Israel's security, thereby reinforcing the Israelcentric

focus of many Jewish community-relations groups.2 2 Albert Chernin, the executivedirector of the National Jewish Community Relations AdvisoryCouncil (NJCRAC, later renamed the Jewish Council for Public Affairs),expressed this perspective in 1978 when he said that our "first priority is Israel,of course, reflecting the complete identity of views of the AmericanJewish leadership with the concerns of the rank and file." The historian JackWertheimer terms this comment a "stunning admission that political effortsto shore up Israel superseded all other concerns of Jewish community relationsorganizations in the United States."2 3

As American foreign aid to Israel began to exceed private contributions,pro-Israel organizations increasingly focused on political activities intendedto preserve or increase U.S. governmental support. According to Wertheimer,"The overall responsibility for lobbying for Israel was assumed bythe Conference of Presidents . . . and AIPAC. Both had been founded inthe 1950s and had played a modest role prior to 1967. The needs of Israelfor political support catapulted these

two organizations to prominence in the1970s and 1980s."2 4

This increased effort reflected awareness that backing Israel was costlyfor the United States and therefore had to be justified and defended in thepolitical sphere. As Morris Amitay, who replaced Kenen as AIPAC's executivedirector in 1975, put it, "The name of the game, if you want to help Israel,is political action."2 5 Under Amitay and his successor, Tom Dine,AIPAC was transformed from an intimate, low-budget operation into alarge, mass-based organization with a staff of more than 150 employees andan annual budget (derived solely from private contributions) that went fromsome $300,000 in 1973 to an estimated $40-60 million today.26 Instead ofshunning the limelight, as it had done under Kenen, AIPAC increasinglysought to advertise its power. According to one former staffer, "The theorywas, no one is scared of you if they don't know about you."2 7 In contrast tothe earlier patterns of intimate lobbying on behalf of Jews by Jewish advisersand sympathetic gentiles, AIPAC and other groups in the lobby did notdefine their public agenda as humanitarian support for Jews in Israel.Rather, the evolution of the lobby increasingly involved the formulation andpromotion of sophisticated arguments about the alignment of America's andIsrael's strategic interests and moral values.

Flush with cash and well positioned in the Cold War political landscape,AIPAC found its political muscle enhanced by new federal rules on campaignfinancing, which triggered the creation of independent PACs and made

it easier to channel money toward pro-Israel candidates. AIPAC may nothave been all that formidable in the early 1960s, but by the 1980s, notes

Warren Bass, it was a "Washington powerhouse."28

UNITY IN DIVERSITY AND THE NORM AGAINST DISSENT

As noted above, the lobby is not a centralized, hierarchical movement. Evenamong the Jewish elements of the lobby, there are important differences onspecific policy issues. In recent years, AIPAC and the Conference of Presidentshave tilted toward Likud and other hard-line parties in Israel and wereskeptical about the Oslo peace process (a phenomenon we discuss at greaterlength below), while a number of other, smaller groups—such as Ameinu,Americans for Peace Now, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom (Jewish Alliance for Justiceand Peace), Israel Policy Forum, Jewish Voice for Peace, Meretz-USA, andthe Tikkun Community—strongly favor a two-state solution and believe Israelneeds to make significant concessions in order to bring it about.2 9

These differences have occasionally led to rifts within or among thesedifferent organizations. In 2006, for example, the Israel Policy Forum, Americansfor Peace Now, Jewish Voice for Peace, and Brit Tzedek v'Shalomopenly opposed an AI PAC-sponsored congressional resolution (HR 4681)that would have imposed even more draconian restrictions on aid to thePalestinians than the Israeli government sought.3 0 A watered-down versionof the resolution passed by a comfortable margin, but the episode remindsus that pro-Israel groups do not form a monolith with a single party line.

These divisions notwithstanding, the majority of organized groups in theAmerican Jewish community—especially the largest and wealthiest amongthem—continue to favor steadfast U.S. support for Israel no matter whatpolicies the Jewish state pursues. As an AIPAC spokesman explained in June2000, when concerns about Israel's arms sales to China led to calls for a reductionin U.S. support, "We are opposed to linking Israel's aid under any circumstancesbecause once it starts it never stops."31 Even the dovishAmericans for Peace Now supports "robust U.S. economic and military assistanceto Israel," opposes calls to "cut or condition" U.S. aid, and seeks only toprevent U.S. aid from being used to support settlement activities in the OccupiedTerritories.3 2 Similarly, the moderate Israel Policy Forum does not advocatemaking American aid more conditional but rather focuses its effortson persuading the U.S. government to work more actively and effectively fora two-state solution.3 3 Despite differences on the peace process and related

issues, in short, almost every pro-Israel group wants to keep the "specialrelationship"intact. A notable exception is Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), whichhas called for the U.S. government to suspend military aid to Israel until itends the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem.3 4 Indeed,given this position, one might argue that JVP is not part of the lobby at all.

Given their desire to maximize U.S. backing, Israeli officials frequentlyengage American Jewish leaders and ask them to help mobilize support inthe United States for particular Israeli policies. As Rabbi AlexanderSchindler, former chair of the Conference of Presidents, told an Israeli magazinein 1976, "The Presidents' Conference and its members have been instrumentsof official governmental Israeli policy. It was seen as our task toreceive directions from government circles and to do our best no matterwhat to affect the Jewish community." (Schindler thought this situation was"not acceptable," telling the interviewer that "American Jewry is in no moodto be used by anyone.")35 Yet Albert Chemin of NJCRAC offered a similarappraisal in the 1970s, saying that "in domestic areas we made policy, but inIsrael affairs the policy was a given .. . In reality, [the Conference ofPresidents]was the vehicle through which Israel communicated its policy to thecommunity."36 Ori Nir of the Forward quotes an unnamed activist with a majorJewish organization claiming in 2005 that "it is routine for us to say: 'Thisis our policy on a certain issue, but we must check what the Israelis think.'We as a community do it all the time." Or as Hyman Bookbinder, a highrankingofficial of the American Jewish Committee, once admitted, "Unlesssomething is terribly pressing, really critical or fundamental, you parrot Israel'sline in order to retain American support. As American Jews, we don'tgo around saying Israel is wrong about its policies."3 7

Israel's ability to galvanize support within the United States has beendemonstrated on numerous occasions. Zionist (and later, Israeli) officialsencouraged American Jewish leaders to campaign for the UN partition planin 1947 and for U.S. recognition in 1948, and to lobby against the abortivepeace plan formulated by the UN mediator Folke Bernadotte in 1948. Coordinatedefforts such as these also helped convince the Truman administrationto significantly increase economic aid to Israel in 1952 and toabandon a Pentagon and State Department proposal for a $ 10 million grantof military assistance to Egypt.3 8 During the crisis preceding the 1967 Six-Day War, the Israeli government instructed its ambassador in Washington to"create a public atmosphere that will constitute pressure on the [Johnson]administration . . . without it being explicitly clear that we are behind thispublic campaign." The effort involved getting sympathetic Americans to

write letters, editorials, telegrams, and public statements, etc. —"in a varietyof styles"—whose purpose, according to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, was"to create a public atmosphere . . . that will strengthen our friends withinthe administration." White House officials eventually asked their Israelicounterparts to shut down the letter-writing campaign, but the Israeli ambassadorreported back to Jerusalem that "of course we are continuing it."According to the historian Tom Segev, the White House was "inundatedwith letters from citizens calling on the president to stand by Israel."3 9

This tendency to support Israel's actions reflexively may be less prevalenttoday, but major organizations in the lobby still defer to the preferences ofIsrael's leaders on many occasions. Following the release of the Bushadministration's"road map" for Middle East peace in March 2003, for example,Malcolm Hoenlein of the Conference of Presidents reportedly told Haaretzthat if the Israeli government expressed reservations about the road map, itwould have the support of America's Jewish community. And, Hoenlein emphasized,"We will not hesitate to make our voice heard."4 0

Despite the fissures that have emerged between the Israeli governmentand some groups within American Jewry, this community "has generally acceptedthe principle that on matters of fundamental security there ought tobe no public criticism of Israel."4 1 According to Steven Rosenthal, "For millionsof American Jews, criticism of Israel was a worse sin than marrying outof the faith." Or as Bookbinder once

acknowledged, "There is a feeling ofguilt as to whether Jews should double-check the Israeli government . . .They automatically fall into line for that very reason."42 Recent surveys ofAmerican Jewish opinion reveal that roughly two-thirds of the respondentsagree that "regardless of their individual views on the peace negotiationswith the Arabs, American Jews should support the policies of the dulyelectedgovernment of Israel."4 3 Thus, even when both leaders and rank andfile of important Jewish-American organizations have serious reservationsabout Israeli policy, they rarely call for the U.S. government to put significantpressure on the Israeli government.

The norm against public criticism has been vividly illustrated on a numberof occasions over the past several decades. In 1973, for example, a groupof progressive American Jews formed a new organization, Breira (Alternative),which called for more open discussion between Israel and the diasporaand sought to mobilize support for withdrawal from the Occupied Territoriesand a peace settlement with the Palestinians. In addition to makingtheir views publicly known through advertisements in major Americannewspapers, several Breira leaders were part of a delegation of American

Jews who met in a private capacity with a group of Palestinian representatives,under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee.

Although a few Jewish leaders defended Breira, a powerful backlashsoon emerged from the major Jewish organizations. AIPAC's Near East Reportaccused Breira of undermining support for Israel, and the president of

the Reform rabbinate, Arthur Lelyveld, said that groups like Breira "gave aidand comfort .. . to those who would cut aid to Israel and leave it defenselessbefore murderers and terrorists." A Hadassah newsletter labeled Breiramembers "cheerleaders for defeatism" and warned its own members to "rejectthe advances of these organizations with their dogmas that run counterto Israeli security and Jewish survival." The president of the conservativeRabbinical Assembly declared that Breira was "fronting for the PLO," andforty-seven rabbis issued a statement terming Breira's positions "practicallyidentical with the Arab point of view." The prosettlement group Americansfor a Safe Israel distributed a thirty-page pamphlet smearing Breira's leadersfor their involvement with other left-wing causes and referring to them as"Jews for Fatah." Not to be outdone, the ZOA magazine American Zionist accusedBreira of abusing the right of free speech, warning that "the Jews whocry 'Foul!' in public must realize the treacherous consequences of theirefforts . . . Ramifications are felt not by them, but by fellow Jews thousandsof miles away."

In the face of this assault, Breira stood little chance of building a followingor establishing a more open climate for discussion. Local communitygroups excluded Breira representatives, and the Jewish Community Councilof New Haven agreed to admit the local Breira chapter only on the conditionthat it confine its criticism within the community. An internalmemorandum prepared by the American Jewish Committee recommendedco-opting the group, but only if it agreed to "direct the exposition of theirdifferentviews on sensitive Israel-Diaspora issues to the Jewish community itselfand refrain from appealing to the general public." Unable to attractsustained funding and weakened by leadership defections, Breira disbandedafter five years.4 4

In response to the Breira controversy, organizations like the Conferenceof Presidents, the Synagogue Council of America, the American JewishCommittee, and NJCRAC conducted internal studies or public inquiries onthe proper place of dissent. According to J. J. Goldberg, "All these organizationsreached the same conclusion: American Jews had the right to discussissues freely, but only within discreet forums outside public view." In 1976,the Israeli ambassador to the United States, Simcha Dinitz, working with

representatives from NJCRAC and the Conference of Presidents, developeda set of principles to guide behavior within the Jewish

community. Thefirst principle, Goldberg notes, was that "Israelis were the only ones entitledto decide Israeli policy" and the second was that "American Jews shouldstand publicly united with Israel and air disputes only in private."45 By the1970s, writes Edward Tivnan, "Total support of Israel had become a requirementof leadership in local Jewish communities throughout America."4 6

The norm against public criticism of Israeli policy remains for the mostpart intact.4 7 In October 1996, for example, the president of ZOA, MortonKlein, sent a letter to ADL head Abraham Foxman protesting an invitation toNew York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman to speak at an ADL dinner,charging that Friedman "regularly defames Israel and its Prime Minister BenjaminNetanyahu." Klein then circulated the letter to an array of officials at theConference of Presidents, leading Foxman to denounce him as a "thought policeman."The dispute intensified when David Bar-Illan, Netanyahu's directorof communications, weighed in and declared that Friedman should not begiven a platform by "any organization that purports to be Zionist." Thoughsometimes critical of certain Israeli policies, Friedman is hardly anti-Israel,and Foxman himself is one of Israel's most ardent defenders. But Klein's responseshows how deep the opposition to open discussion runs.4 8

A few years later, Edgar Bronfman Sr., then president of the World JewishCongress, was accused of "perfidy" when he wrote a letter to PresidentBush urging him to pressure Israel to curb construction of its controversial"security fence." The executive vice president of the congress, Isi Liebler,declared that "it would be obscene at any time for the president of the WorldJewish Congress to lobby the president of the United States to resist policiesbeing promoted by the government of Israel."4 9 Liebler and others were similarlyincensed two years later, when the president of the moderate Israel

Policy Forum, Seymour Reich, advised Secretary of State Condoleezza Riceto pressure Israel to reopen a critical border crossing in the Gaza Strip inNovember 2005. Reich's advice to Rice was reasonable and well intentioned,but Liebler denounced his action as "irresponsible behavior," and thepresident of the Orthodox Union, Stephen Savitzky, said it was "not onlydisrespectfulto Israel's government but offensive to millions of American Jewswho categorically reject such an approach." Liebler also warned, "There isobviously something sick in the state of World Jewry when purportedlymainstream leaders feel that they can lobby freely against the security policiesof the democratically elected government of Israel. If this sort of behav

ior is to be tolerated we may as well write off our one remaining ally—Diaspora Jewry." Recoiling from these attacks, Reich announced that "theword pressure is not in my vocabulary when it comes to Israel."5 0

The reluctance to criticize Israel's policies openly is not difficult tofathom. In addition to the obvious desire not to say anything that might aidIsrael's enemies, groups or individuals who criticize Israeli policy or theU.S.-Israel relationship are likely to find it harder to retain support and raisefunds within the Jewish community. They also run the risk of being ostracizedby the larger mainstream organizations. Although groups like Americansfor Peace Now, the Tikkun Community, the Israel Policy Forum, andthe New Israel Fund have endured and thrived where Breira did not, otherprogressive Jewish groups, such as New Jewish Agenda, encountered thesame opposition that Breira had faced and lasted little more than a decade.5 1Similarly, although Americans for Peace Now was eventually admitted to theConference of Presidents in 1993 after a contentious struggle, the progressiveMeretz USA and the liberal Reconstructionist Rabbinical Associationwere denied membership in 2002 despite support from moderate groupswithin the Conference. On a smaller scale, Jewish Voice for Peace was denieda booth at a major Jewish community event in the San Francisco areaon the grounds that it was insufficiently supportive of Israel, and the Hillelchapter at the University of Texas refused to give an organization called JewishStudents for Palestinian Rights space to conduct a study group.5 2

Efforts to marginalize dissenting Jewish voices continue to this

day.When the Union of Progressive Zionists (UPZ) sponsored campus appearancesin 2006 by Breaking the Silence, an organization of former Israeli soldiersthat is critical of IDF operations in the Occupied Territories, ZOAdenounced UPZ and demanded that it be expelled from the Israel on CampusCoalition (ICC), a network of pro-Israel groups that includes AIPACand the ADL. According to ZOA's Klein, sponsoring groups that are criticalof Israel "is not the mission of the ICC." UPZ's director emphasized thegroup's "love for Israel," other groups rallied to its defense, and the ICCsteering committee unanimously rejected ZOA's demand. Undeterred,Klein denounced the members of the steering committee and said, "Theirmission includes fighting incitement, and yet we are astonished that theywould ignore this incitement by Israelis against Israel." ZOA also issued apress release urging member organizations in the ICC to change their votes.The press release quoted an Israeli Foreign Ministry report saying, "The willingnessof Jewish communities to host these organizations and even sponsor

them is unfortunate . . . Their negative effect on Israels image must bestopped." At least one Orthodox group on the ICC steering committee subsequentlyannounced it was now in favor of removing the UPZ.5 3

THE LOBBY MOVES RIGHT

Most American Jews have long supported liberal causes and the Democraticparty, and a majority of them favor a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.5 4 Nonetheless, some of the most important groups inthe lobby—including AIPAC and the Conference of Presidents—have becomeincreasingly conservative over time and are now led by hard-liners who

support the positions of their hawkish counterparts in Israel. As J. J. Goldbergchronicles in his important book, Jewish Power, the Six-Day War and itsaftermath brought into prominence a group of "New Jews" drawn disproportionatelyfrom hard-line Zionist, Orthodox, and neoconservative circles."Their defiance was so strident, and their anger so intense," he writes, "thatthe rest of the Jewish community respectfully stood back and let the NewJews take the lead. The minority was permitted to speak for the mass andbecome the dominant voice of Jewish politics."55

This trend was reinforced by the campaign on behalf of the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment (which linked most-favored-nation trading status for theSoviet Union to Moscow's willingness to permit greater Jewish emigration),by the emergence and growth of the so-called neoconservative movement(see below), and by the Likud party's successful effort to cultivate andstrengthen hard-line support in key pro-Israel organizations during the yearswhen Likud was sharing power with Israel's Labor party. According to Goldberg,"The genius of Shamir's strategy . . . was to manipulate the centralbodies of Jewish representation so that, without taking sides, they becamevoices for the Likud half of the government." Likud party officials (includingPrime Minister Shamir's chief of staff Yossi Ben-Aharon) worked to ensurethat the Conference of Presidents was chaired by more conservative officialsand also helped engineer the selection of Malcolm Hoenlein as executivevice chairman of the conference in 1986. More hard-line groups were givengreater access and attention by Israeli leaders, which reinforced the perceptionthat they were the authoritative voices of the Jewish community. As anadviser to Labor party leader Shimon Peres later admitted, "Ignoring AmericanJewry was one of the biggest mistakes we made . . . We let Shamir'speople do whatever they wanted."5 6

WHAT IS THE "ISRAEL LOBBY"?

This rightward shift also reflects the way decisions are made in some keyorganizations in the lobby, as well as the growing influence of a small numberof wealthy conservatives who increasingly dominate organizations likeAIPAC. There are more than fifty organizations represented in the Conferenceof Presidents, for example, and each has a single vote regardless of size.But as Michael Massing points out, "Smaller conservative groups in the conferencedecisively outnumber the larger liberal ones and so can neutralizetheir influence. And that leaves considerable discretion in the hands of [executivevice chairman] Malcolm Hoenlein," who is a longtime supporter ofIsrael's

settler movement and was deeply skeptical about the Oslo peaceprocess.5 7

Similarly, membership on AIPAC's board of directors is based on eachdirector's financial contributions, not, observes Massing, on "how well theyrepresent AIPAC's members."5 8 The individuals willing to give the largestamounts to AIPAC (and to sympathetic politicians) tend to be the most zealousdefenders of Israel, and AIPAC's top leadership (consisting primarily offormer presidents of the organization) is considerably more hawkish on MiddleEast issues than are most Jewish Americans. Although AIPAC formallyendorsed the Oslo peace process in 1993, it did little to make it work anddropped its opposition to a Palestinian state—without endorsing the idea—only after Ehud Barak became prime minister in 1999.59

Indeed, AIPAC and other hard-line groups have occasionally backedmore extreme positions than those favored by the Israeli government. In1994, for example, the hawkish ZOA successfully lobbied for an amendmentto the foreign aid bill that placed additional restrictions on U.S. aid tothe Palestinian Authority, even though both the Clinton administration andthe Rabin government in Israel opposed the measure.6 0 The Conference ofPresidents never endorsed the Oslo peace process, and AIPAC helped sponsorthe 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, a transparent attempt to disrupt thepeace process by requiring the United States to move its embassy from TelAviv to Jerusalem.6 1 Indeed, the key donors that form AIPAC's inner circlereportedly ousted executive director Tom Dine because his views were insufficientlyhawkish.6 2

In addition to this tendency for those with more extreme views to backand dominate key organizations in the lobby, there is another reason thatmany pro-Israel groups have moved rightward: to keep contributions flowing

in. As Waxman notes, "Many American Jewish organizations now need Israelto legitimate their own existence. Although these organizations mayhave been established for the purpose of enhancing and strengthening Is

rael, today Israel is vital for their continued viability."63 Portraying Israel asbeleaguered and vulnerable and issuing dire warnings about continued orgrowing anti-Semitism helps maintain a high level of concern among potentialsupporters and thus helps ensure these organizations' continued existence.Writing in 1992, Jonathan Woocher of the Jewish Education Serviceof North America made precisely this point: "We have seen the emergenceof a whole new industry in America, of organizations monitoring and purportingto fight anti-Semitism everywhere in the world . . . The success ofthe Simon Wiesenthal Center has been particularly striking. It has becomea major direct mail fundraising enterprise by outflanking even the ADL inthe hunt for anti-Semitic threats to Jewish security. It is (sadly) not uncommontoday to see organizations jockeying for position in a context to determinewho among them is 'toughest' in fighting anti-Semitism that is wagedin the Jewish press and barrages of direct mail appeals."6 4 Or as Thomas L.Friedman of the New York Times remarked three years later, "Ever since Mr.Rabin and Mr. Arafat shook hands they have received only the most tepidsupport from mainstream American Jewish groups, like the Conference ofPresidents, and outright hostility from the orthodox and fringe Jewish groupings.It is as if these organizations can only thrive if they have an enemy,someone to fight."65

It bears repeating that a number of groups in the American Jewish communityare critical of certain Israeli policies, and especially its continuedpresence in the Occupied Territories. Some of these organizations, such asthe Israel Policy Forum or Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, actively promote U.S. engagementin the peace process and have been able to win some minor legislativevictories in recent years. Yet such groups lack the financial resourcesand the influence of AIPAC, the ADL, ZOA, or the Conference of Presidents,whose right-of-center views are unfortunately taken by politicians,policy makers, and the media to be the representative voice of AmericanJewry.66 For the moment, therefore, the major organizations in the lobby willcontinue to advocate policy positions at odds with many of the people inwhose name they claim to speak.

THE ROLE OF THE NEOCONSERVATIVES

The lobby's drift to the right has been reinforced by the emergence of theneoconservatives. The neoconservative movement has been an importantpart of American intellectual and political life since the 1970s, but it has

drawn particular attention since September 11. This group has been prominentin shaping the Bush administrations unilateralist foreign policy, and especiallythe ill-fated decision to invade Iraq in March 2003.

Neoconservatism is a political ideology with distinct views on both domesticand foreign policy, although only the latter is relevant here.6 7 Mostneoconservatives extol the virtues of American hegemony—and sometimeseven the idea of an American empire—and they believe U.S. power shouldbe used to encourage the spread of democracy and discourage potential rivalsfrom even trying to compete with the United States.6 8 In their view,spreading democracy and preserving U.S. dominance is the best route tolong-term peace. Neoconservatives also believe that America's democraticsystem ensures that it will be seen as a benign hegemon by most other countries,and that U.S. leadership will be welcomed provided it is exercised decisively.They tend to be skeptical of international institutions (especiallythe UN, which they regard as both anti-Israel and as a constraint on America'sfreedom of action) and wary of many allies (especially the Europeans,whom they see as idealistic pacifists free-riding on the Pax Americana).6 9Viewing U.S. leadership as "good both for America and for the world," toquote the website of the neoconservative Project for New American Century,

neoconservatives generally favor the unilateral exercise of Americanpower instead.

Very importantly, neoconservatives believe that military force is an extremelyuseful tool for shaping the world in ways that will benefit America.If the United States demonstrates its military prowess and shows that it iswilling to use the power at its disposal, then allies will follow our lead andpotential adversaries will realize it is futile to resist and will decide to"bandwagon"with the United States.7 0 Neoconservatism, in short, is an especiallyhawkish political ideology.

Neoconservatives occupy influential positions at a variety of organizationsand institutions. Prominent neoconservatives include former and presentpolicy makers like Elliott Abrams, Kenneth Adelman, William Bennett,John Bolton, Douglas Feith, the late Jeane Kirkpatrick, I. Lewis "Scooter"Libby, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, James Woolsey, and David Wurmser;journalists like the late Robert Bartley, David Brooks, Charles Krauthammer,William Kristol, Bret Stephens, and Norman Podhoretz; academics likeFouad Ajami, Eliot Cohen, Aaron Friedberg, Bernard Lewis, and RuthWedgwood; and think-tank pundits like Max Boot, David Frum, Reuel MarcGerecht, Robert Kagan, Michael Ledeen, Joshua Muravchik, Daniel Pipes,Danielle Pletka, Michael Rubin, and Meyrav Wurmser. The leading neocon

servative magazines and newspapers are Commentary, the New York Sun,the Wall Street Journal op-ed page, and the Weekly Standard. The thinktanks and advocacy groups most closely associated with these neoconservativesare the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the Center for SecurityPolicy (CSP), the Hudson Institute, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies(FDD), the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), theMiddle East Forum (MEF), the Project for a New American Century(PNAC), and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP).

Virtually all neoconservatives are strongly committed to Israel, a pointthey emphasize openly and unapologetically. According to Max Boot, a leadingneoconservative pundit, supporting Israel is "a key tenet of neoconservatism,"a position he attributes to "shared liberal democratic values."71Benjamin Ginsberg, a political scientist who has written extensively aboutAmerican politics as well as anti-Semitism, convincingly argues that one ofthe main reasons that the neoconservatives moved to the right was "their attachmentto Israel and their growing frustration during the 1960s with aDemocratic

party that was becoming increasingly opposed to American militarypreparedness and increasingly enamored of Third World causes." Inparticular, writes Ginsberg, they embraced Ronald Reagan's "hardline anticommunism"because they saw it as a "political movement that would guaranteeIsrael's security."72

Given their hawkish orientation, it is not surprising that the neoconservativestend to align with right-wing elements in Israel itself. For example, itwas a group of eight neoconservatives (led by Richard Perle and includingDouglas Feith and David Wurmser) that drafted the 1996 "Clean Break" studyfor incoming Likud Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That study advocatedthat Israel abandon the Oslo peace process and use bold measures—including military force—to topple unfriendly Middle Eastern regimes andthereby "transcend" the Arab-Israeli conflict.7 3

Many neoconservatives are connected to an overlapping set of Washingtonbasedthink tanks, committees, and publications whose agenda includespromoting the special relationship between the United States and Israel.Consider Richard Perle, one of the most prominent neoconservatives, who isa fellow at AEI and also affiliated with the right-wing CSP, the Hudson Institute,JINSA, PNAC, MEF, and FDD, and also serves on WINEP's board ofadvisers. His fellow neoconservatives are similarly well connected: WilliamKristol is the editor of the Weekly Standard, cofounder of PNAC, and previouslyassociated with FDD, MEF, and AEI. The Washington Post columnistCharles Krauthammer is a past recipient of AEI's Irving Kristol Award

(named for William's father, one of neoconservatism's founding figures), asignatory of several PNAC open letters, a contributing editor at the WeeklyStandard, and is also affiliated with FDD. The list of past and present connectionswould delight a network theorist: Elliott Abrams (CSP, Hudson,PNAC); William Bennett (AEI, CSP, PNAC); John Bolton (AEI, JINSA,PNAC); Douglas Feith (CSP, JINSA); David Frum (AEI, Weekly Standard);Reuel Marc Gerecht (AEI, PNAC, Weekly Standard); Michael Ledeen (AEI,JINSA); Jeane Kirkpatrick (AEI, FDD, JINSA, PNAC, WINEP); JoshuaMuravchik (AEI, JINSA, PNAC, WINEP); Daniel Pipes (PNAC, MEF,WINEP); Norman Podhoretz (Hudson, Commentary, PNAC); MichaelRubin (AEI, CSP, MEF); Paul Wolfowitz (AEI, PNAC, WINEP); DavidWurmser (AEI, MEF, FDD); and James Woolsey (CSP, JINSA, PNAC, FDD).

This summary by no means exhausts the interrelated affiliations withinthe neoconservative movement, but what may seem to some like a shadowyconspiracy (or even a "right-wing cabal") is anything but. On the contrary,the various think tanks, committees, foundations, and publications thathave nurtured the neoconservative movement operate much as other policynetworks do. Far from shunning publicity or engaging in hidden plots, thesegroups actively court publicity for the explicit purpose of shaping public andelite opinion and thereby moving U.S. foreign policy in the directions theyfavor. The neoconservative network is both undeniably impressive and similarto networks that have arisen in other policy areas, such as tax reform, theenvironment, or immigration.

Of course, the neoconservatives care about America's security as well asIsrael's, and they believe that their policy prescriptions will benefit bothcountries. In the 1980s, however, some more traditional conservatives—sometimes referred to as "paleoconservatives"—claimed that the neoconservativeswere more concerned about Israel than the United States. Forexample, Russell Kirk, the well-known conservative political theorist, maintainedthat "what really animates the neoconservatives .. . is the preservationof Israel. That lies in back of everything."74 The neoconservativesvehemently denied these charges, which led to several bitter exchangesbetween these contending conservative factions. That conflict eventuallysubsided, but tension still remains between these two strands of theconservative movement.7 5

A number of commentators have emphasized the Jewish roots of

neoconservatism,even though many of the movement's key tenets run counterto the liberal attitudes that still predominate in the American Jewish community.In The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shap

ing of Public Policy, a book that paints a sympathetic portrait of its subject,Murray Friedman goes so far as to describe neoconservatism as "AmericanJewish conservatism."7 6 But not all neoconservatives are Jewish, which remindsus that the lobby is defined not by ethnicity or religion but by a politicalagenda. There are a number of prominent gentiles who have adoptedmost if not all of the basic tenets of neoconservatism, to include vigoroussupport for Israel and a tendency to favor its more hard-line elements. Theirranks include the Wall Street Journal editor Robert Bartley former Secretaryof Education William Bennett, former UN Ambassadors John Bolton andJeane Kirkpatrick, and former CIA director James Woolsey. Although thesenon-Jews have played an important role in pushing forward the neoconservativeagenda, Jews nonetheless comprise the core of the neoconservativemovement. In this sense, neoconservativism is a microcosm of the largerpro-Israel movement. Jewish Americans are central to the neoconservativemovement, just as they form the bulk of the lobby, but non-Jews are activein both. Neoconservatives are also emblematic insofar as much of their politicalagenda is at odds with the traditional political views of most AmericanJews.

THE CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS

The lobby includes another important group of gentiles—the ChristianZionists, a subset of the broader politically oriented Christian Right. Prominentmembers of this constituency include religious figures such as the lateJerry Falwell, Gary Bauer, Pat Robertson, and John Hagee, as well as politicianslike former House Majority Leaders Tom DeLay (R-TX) and RichardArmey (R-TX), and Senator James Inhofe (R-OK). Although support for Israelis not their only concern, a number of Christian evangelicals have becomeincreasingly visible and vocal in their support for the Jewish state, andthey have recently formed an array of organizations to advance that commitmentwithin the political system.7 7 In a sense, the Christian Zionists can bethought of as an important "junior partner" to the various pro-Israel groupsin the American Jewish community.

The origins of Christian Zionism lie in the theology of dispensationalism,an approach to biblical interpretation that emerged in nineteenth-centuryEngland, largely through the efforts of Anglican ministers Louis Way andJohn Nelson Darby. Dispensationalism is a form of premillennialism, whichasserts that the world will experience a period of worsening tribulations un

til Christ returns. Like many other Christians, dispensationalists believethat Christ's return is foretold in Old and New Testament prophecy, andthat the return of the Jews to Palestine is a key event in the preordainedprocess that will lead to the Second Coming. The theology of Darby, Way,and their followers influenced a number of prominent English politiciansand may have made British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour more receptiveto the idea of creating a Jewish national home in Palestine.7 8

Dispensationalist theology was popularized in the United States in thenineteenth and early twentieth centuries by a number of Protestant theologians,including the evangelist Dwight Moody (founder of Chicago's MoodyBible Institute), C. I. Schofield, and William E. Blackstone. Recent popularexpressions include Hal Lindsey's best-selling Late Great Planet Earth andTimothy LaHaye's Left Behind series, a fictional account of Armageddonwhose combined sales reportedly total more than fifty million copies.7 9

The founding of the state of Israel in 1948 gave new life to the dispensationalistmovement, but the Six-Day War in 1967, which its leaders saw as a"miracle of God," was even more important for its emergence as a politicalforce.80 Dispensationalists interpreted Israel's

seizure of all of Jerusalem andthe West Bank (which, like Israel's Likud party, they refer to as Judea andSamaria) as the fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecy, and these"signs" encouraged them and other Christian evangelicals to begin workingto ensure that the United States was on the "right side" as the Bible's blueprintfor the end-times unfolded.8 1 According to Timothy Weber, formerpresident of the Memphis Theological Seminary, "Before the Six Day War,dispensationalists were content to sit in the bleachers of history, explainingthe End-Time game on the field below . . . But after [the] expansion of Israelinto the West Bank and Gaza, they began to get down on the field andbe sure the teams lined up right, becoming involved in political, financial,and religious ways they never had before."8 2 Their efforts were part of thebroader rise of the so-called Christian Right (not all of whom are stronglycommitted to Israel) and were clearly aided by the growing political prominenceof the evangelical movement.

Given these beliefs, it is not surprising that Daniel Pipes believes that"other than the Israel Defense Forces, America's Christian Zionists may bethe Jewish state's ultimate strategic asset." Or as Michael Freund, former directorof communications for Benjamin Netanyahu, wrote in 2006, "ThankGod for Christian Zionists. Like it or not, the future of the relationship betweenIsrael and the U.S. may very well hinge far less on America's Jewsthan on its Christians."8 3

Christian Zionists have formed a number of organizations whose avowedpurpose is to encourage support for Israel. These groups include Christians

United for Israel (CUFI, described by founder John Hagee as "a Christianversion of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee"), the NationalChristian Leadership Conference for Israel, the Unity Coalition for Israel,Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFIC), the ChristiansTsrael PublicAction Committee, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem(ICEJ), and a host of smaller groups.84 Christian Zionists are also key playersin the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (IFCJ), a Chicagobasedorganization run by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, whose mission is "to promoteunderstanding and cooperation between Jews and Christians and tobuild broad support for Israel." In 2002, IFCJ allied with the former ChristianCoalition director and GOP strategist Ralph Reed to form a new group,Stand for Israel, that seeks "to engage people both spiritually and politicallyon behalf of Israel" and sponsors an annual "international day of prayer andsolidarity" on Israel's behalf.8 5

In this modern, activist phase, Christian Zionist beliefs naturally alignwith groups in the American Jewish community and in Israel that supportthe settler movement and oppose a two-state solution. According to CUFIfounder Hagee, "We support Israel because all other nations were created byan act of men, but Israel was created by an act of God!" Hagee has also toldfollowers that "God opposes giving away the land" and claims his movementhas raised more than $12 million to help settle new immigrants in Israel, includingin settlements in the Occupied Territories.86

Hagee's views are typical of Christian Zionism. The late Ed McAteer,founder of the evangelical Religious Roundtable and a major organizingforce in the Christian Right, once declared that "every grain of sand betweenthe Dead Sea, the Jordan River, and the Mediterranean Sea belongs to theJews. This includes the West Bank and Gaza."8 7 According to ICEJ directorMalcolm Hedding, "We stand for the right that all the land that God gaveunder the Abrahamic covenant 4000 years ago is Israel's . . . There is nosuch thing as a Palestinian."88 Similarly, Ted Beckett, founder of CFIC, describesthe mission of CFIC as providing "solidarity, comfort and aid" to settlersin "Judea, Samaria, and Gaza"; the organization pairs U.S. churches withindividual Israeli settlements so that the former can support the latter. In onecelebrated example, Faith Bible Chapel in Arvada, Colorado, "adopted" theWest Bank settlement of Ariel, reportedly providing funds for a library,health clinic, and other needs.8 9

As noted above, Christian Zionists oppose a two-state solution or any

other form of territorial concession to the Palestinians. On the eve of EgyptianPresident Anwar Sadat's breakthrough visit to Jerusalem in 1977, evangelicalgroups published advertisements in major American newspaperssaying that they viewed "with grave concern any effort to carve out of theJewish homeland another nation or political entity."90 In 1996, the ThirdInternationalChristian Zionist Congress resolved that "the Land which Hepromised to His People is not to be partitioned .. . It would be further errorfor the nations to recognize a Palestinian state in any part of Eretz Israel."9 1Such ardent beliefs led the Christian Right leader (and former GOP presidentialhopeful) Pat Robertson to suggest that the stroke suffered by IsraeliPrime Minister Ariel Sharon in January 2006 was divine retribution forSharon's decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. In Robertson's words,"He was dividing God's land and I would say woe unto any prime minister ofIsrael who takes a similar course to appease the [European Union], theUnited Nations, or the United States of America . . . God says, 'this land belongsto me. You better leave it alone.'" Robertson later apologized for his"inappropriate and insensitive" remarks, but they offer a revealing insightinto how some Christian evangelicals justify a greater Israel.9 2

These same beliefs appear to have influenced several prominent U.S.politicians. In 2002, House Majority Whip (and later Majority Leader) TomDeLay told AIPAC's annual policy conference that he opposed giving land tothe Palestinians, saying, "I've toured Judea and Samaria, and I've stood onthe Golan Heights. I didn't see occupied territory. I saw Israel."9 3 DeLay'spredecessor as Majority Leader, Richard Armey, told Hardball's ChrisMatthews in May 2002 that he was "content to have Israel grab the entire

West Bank" and that he "happened to believe that the Palestinians shouldleave."94 Or as Senator James Inhofe told his colleagues in a floor speechexplainingwhy Israel had the right to all of Palestine: "This is the most importantreason: Because God said so .. . It is at this place [Hebron] where Godappeared to Abraham and said, 'I am giving you this land,' the West Bank."9 5

Given the Christian Zionists' support for an expansionist Israel, it is notsurprising that Israeli hard-liners have been eager to make common causewith them, especially given the growing opposition to the occupation withinmainline Christian churches. As Colin Shindler observes, "A symbiotic relationshipthus came into existence after 1977 that served both the ideologiesof the Israeli Right and the Christian Right."9 6 Menachem Begins Likudgovernment actively courted evangelicals in this period, giving Falwell a privatejet in 1979 and making him in 1980 the only gentile ever to receive thecoveted Jabotinsky Medal for "outstanding achievement" (other recipients

include authors Leon Uris and Elie Wiesel). When Israel bombed Iraq'sOsirak reactor in 1981, Begin reportedly called Falwell before calling PresidentReagan, asking Falwell to "get to work for me" and explain Israel's actionto the American public.9 7 Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu broughta group of evangelical leaders to Israel in 1996 under the auspices of the IsraelChristian Advocacy Council, and Pat Robertson and Ehud Olmert(mayor of Jerusalem at the time) served as cochairs of the Praying for Jerusalemcampaign in 2002.9 8

The Israeli government has encouraged Christian tour groups to visit Israel,both as a source of tourism income and to solidify evangelical supportback in the United States. Thus, in 2002, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon toldICEJ's annual Feast of Tabernacles meeting (reportedly the largest foreignreligious gathering in Israel) that "we need you and we need your support.. . I also have a message I would like you to take home: send morepeople like you to visit Israel."9 9 Sharon's successor, Ehud Olmert, offered asimilar message when he was mayor of Jerusalem, telling the gathering, "Youare part of our army, of our power, of our defense."10 0

Christian Zionist organizations have become increasingly visible on otherMiddle East issues as well. CUFI organized a pro-Israel meeting in Washingtonduring the second Lebanon war in the summer of 2006, and JerryFalwell chose that moment to warn, "We are on the verge of a war withoutborders," which "will serve as a prelude or forerunner to the future Battle ofArmageddon and the glorious return

of Jesus Christ."10 1 The best-sellingmillenarian author Hal Lindsey wrote in January 2007 that a preemptivenuclear strike on Iran was "the only logical choice available to Israel," andJohn Hagee warned in his 2006 book, Jerusalem Countdown, "The comingnuclear showdown with Iran is a certainty. The war of Ezekiel 38-39 couldbegin before this book gets published."10 2 Hagee also condemned the bipartisanIraq Study Group report in December 2006, saying that James Baker"is once again sticking the knife in Israel's back" and declaring that "my father'sgeneration . . . would have bombed Iran by this time."10 3

Some Jewish-American organizations have welcomed this alliance withthe Christian Zionists, despite lingering concerns that these groups seek toadvance a Christian agenda in the United States and to convert Jews toChristianity. AIPAC established its own liaison office to work with the evangelicalmovement, pro-Likud organizations such as the Zionist Organizationof America forged close links with Falwell, and cooperation with Christianevangelicals even received a blessing in the pages of Commentary from IrvingKristol, one of neoconservatism's founding fathers.10 4 According to

Nathan Perlmutter, former director of the ADL, "Jews can live with all thedomestic priorities of the Christian Right, on which liberal Jews differ soradically, because none of these concerns is as important as Israel." Perlmutter'ssuccessor, Abraham Foxman, who has regularly criticized the domesticpolitical agenda of the Christian Right, echoed this view in early 2007, saying

that the ADL welcomed evangelical support "at a time when there areserious threats to the Jewish state."10 5 According to David Harris, executivedirector of the American Jewish Committee, willingness to align with theChristian Right was essentially pragmatic: "the end of time may come tomorrow,but Israel hangs in the balance today."10 6

The strong ties between the two main branches of the lobby were on displayat the 2007 AIPAC Policy Conference, where John Hagee s address tothe opening dinner received an overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception fromthose in attendance. The response to Hagee is somewhat surprising, giventhat he has recently written that Jews "have everything but spiritual life," thatanti-Semitism was the result of the Jews' "rebellion [against God]," and thatGod was going to drag "anti-Semitic nations to the nations of Israel to crushthem so that the Jews of Israel as a whole will confess that He is theLord."10 7 Despite Hagee's worrisome statements, ADL's Foxman declared,"There is a role for him . . . because of his support for Israel."10 8

Awareness of the Christian Zionists' agenda has made more moderate Israelisand Jewish Americans deeply wary of their embrace. "But for theneeds of Israel," observes the historian Naomi Cohen, "most American Jewswould have rejected out of hand any dealings with the New ChristianRight."10 9 They fear that converting Jews to Christianity is still a long-termgoal of many evangelical groups, and they worry that the Christian Zionists'uncompromising views will make it more difficult to reach a lasting peacewith the Palestinians. Jo-Ann Mort of Americans for Peace Now terms thecollaboration between American Jews and the Christian Right an "unholy alliance,"and the Israeli moderate Yossi Alpher warns that Christian support forcontinued settlement expansion is "leading us into a scenario of out-and-outdisaster." As he told CBS News, "God save us from these people." Similarly,the Israeli-American scholar Gershom Gorenberg notes that dispensationalisttheology does not foresee a happy fate for Jews: in the end-times "the Jewsdie or convert." In particular, he warns, the Christian Zionists "don't love realJewish people. They love us as characters in their story, in their play . . .[and] it's a five act play in which the Jews disappear in the fourth act."11 0

How important is the Christian Zionist branch of the Israel lobby? Byproviding financial support to the settler movement and by publicly inveigh

ing against territorial concessions, the Christian Zionists have

reinforcedhard-line attitudes in Israel and the United States and have made it moredifficult for American leaders to put pressure on Israel. Absent their support,settlers would be less numerous in Israel, and the U.S. and Israeli governmentswould be less constrained by their presence in the Occupied Territoriesas well as their political activities. Plus, Christian tourism (a substantialportion occurring under evangelical auspices) has become a lucrative sourceof income for Israel, reportedly generating revenues in the neighborhood of$1 billion each year.11 1

The presence of a vocal but non-Jewish voice in support of Israel alsomakes U.S. backing more than just a response to special pleading by AmericanJewry and probably exerts some effect on the political calculations ofpoliticians who do not have large Jewish constituencies. Irvine Andersonsuggests that dispensationalist thinking reinforces "an American culturalpredisposition to support the State of Israel, based in part on the influenceof the Christian Bible." In particular, "having grown up hearing Bible stories.. . or having read about . . . the ingathering of Jews to Palestine as aprelude to the Second Coming, it is not surprising that many, though certainlynot all, Americans simply assume that it is right and proper for Jews toreturn to Palestine and create their own state there."11 2

Yet the influence of the Christian Zionists should not be overstated.Their strong commitment to a "greater Israel" and resulting opposition to atwo-state solution did not prevent the Clinton administration from pursuingthe latter at Camp David in 2000, did not halt the 1998 Wye Agreementmandating an Israeli redeployment from parts of the West Bank, and, perhapsmost revealingly, did not stop President George W. Bush, who hasclose ties to the Christian Right, from declaring his own support for a Palestinian

state in 2001.

There are several reasons why Christian Zionists exert less impact on

U.S. Middle East policy than the other parts of the Israel lobby do. Althoughthe Christian Right has been a key part of President Bush's political base(which has to some degree magnified the visibility of the Christian Zionistelements within this broader movement), the alliance goes well beyond theissue of Israel to include a broad array of social issues. Supporting Israel isonly one of the many issues that evangelicals like Robertson, Bauer, and Falwellhave been concerned with, and it may not even be the most important.Leaders of the Christian Right often claim to speak on behalf of forty millionor more professed evangelical Christians, but the number of followerswho care deeply about Israel is undoubtedly smaller. In addition, and in

sharp contrast to groups like AIPAC, Christian Zionists lack the organizationalcapacity to analyze national security topics or to offer specific legislativeguidance on concrete foreign policy issues. Surveys of congressionalaides by Ruth Mouly in the 1980s and Irvine Anderson in 1999 found "littleevidence of extensive direct lobbying of Congress by Falwell or other prominentmembers of the Religious Right on the subject of Israel."11 3 Similarly,Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, founder of IFCJ, told the Israeli writer Zev Chafetsthat a delegation of evangelicals he had taken to visit then National SecurityAdviser Condoleezza Rice in 2003 "was the only Christian group ever tolobby the White House specifically on behalf of Israel."11 4 Even if Ecksteinoverstated the case somewhat, it is clear that Israel is only one of manyitems on the evangelicals' list of concerns. By contrast, groups like AIPAC,the Anti-Defamation League, ZOA, and the Conference of Presidents put

U.S. support for Israel at the top of their agenda, and their efforts to influenceforeign policy are reinforced by think tanks like JINSA and WINEP.Furthermore, Christianity contains a complex set of moral and religiousteachings, and many of its most important precepts neither justify nor encourageunconditional support for Israel. Christian Zionists may believe that biblicalprophecy justifies Jewish control of all of Palestine, but other Christianprinciples—such as Christ's command to "love thy neighbor as thyself"—aresharply at odds with Israel's treatment of its Palestinian subjects. Familiaritywith Old Testament stories and other aspects of the Judeo-Christian

traditionhas not prevented many mainline Christian churches from openly backinga two-state solution and criticizing various aspects of Israeli policy, basedon their own commitment to Christian principles of peace and justice.11 5Just as many American Jews do not support everything that Israel is doing,neither do many Christians, including evangelicals.

Christian Zionists also lack the financial power of the major pro-IsraelJewish groups, and they do not have the same media presence when itcomes to Middle East issues.11 6 Leaders like Robertson or Bauer may getlots of media attention when they speak on moral or religious questions, butmedia organizations are more likely to turn to the Brookings Institution orWINEP when discussing current events in Israel or the Middle East. For allthese reasons, the Christian Zionists are best seen as a significant adjunct tothe Jewish elements of the lobby, but not its most important part.

THE LOBBY'S SOURCES OF POWER

Why is the Israel lobby so effective? One reason is the wide-open nature ofthe American political system. The United States has a divided form of government,a well-established tradition of free speech, and a system in whichelections are very expensive to run and where campaign contributions areweakly regulated. This environment gives different groups many differentways to gain access or influence policy. Interest groups can direct campaigncontributions to favored candidates and try to defeat candidates whose viewsare suspect. They can also lobby elected representatives and members of theexecutive branch, and they can try to get their own supporters appointed tokey policy-making positions. Moreover, there are numerous ways for interestgroups to mold public opinion: by cultivating sympathetic journalists; writing

books, articles, and op-eds; and working to discredit or marginalize anyonewith different views. For a group that is highly motivated and has sufficientresources,there is no shortage of ways to influence public policy.11 7

The lobby's effectiveness also reflects the basic dynamics of interestgroup politics in a pluralistic society. In a democracy, even relatively smallgroups can exercise considerable influence if they are strongly committed toa particular issue and the rest of the population is largely indifferent. Evenif the group's absolute numbers are small, policy makers—and especiallymembers of Congress—will tend to accommodate them, because they canbe confident that the rest of the population will not penalize them for doingso. As one U.S. senator put it, when asked why he and his colleagues signeda piece of controversial legislation pushed by the lobby, "There is no politicaladvantage in not signing. If you do sign you don't offend anyone. If youdon't you might offend some Jews in your state."11 8

The disproportionate influence of small but focused interest groups increaseseven more when opposing groups are weak or nonexistent, becausepoliticians have to accommodate only one set of interests and the public islikely to hear only one side of the story. Whether the issue is farm subsidiesor foreign policy, special interest groups often wield political power that farexceeds their absolute numbers in the population.

As will become clear in the next chapter, the Israel lobby enjoys a numberof advantages in the competition for influence in the United States. AmericanJews are relatively prosperous and well educated, and have an admirablephilanthropic tradition. They give generously to political parties and havevery high rates of political participation. A sizable minority of American Jewsis not strongly committed to Israel, but a clear majority is at least somewhat

engaged and a significant minority is strongly energized by this issue. Whenmarried to the support Israel gets from Christian Zionists, it is a potent base.

Equally important is the impressive level of resources and expertise withinthe major Jewish organizations in the lobby. According to the political scientistRobert Trice, "Most major Jewish groups are characterized by large memberships,well-trained professional staffs, adequately financed social, welfare andpolitical

programs, specialized working groups for particular problems andelaborate internal communications networks." Moreover, the existence of numerousorganizations at the local and national level explains "the ability of thepro-Israel movement to mobilize rapidly and in a coordinated fashion on a nationalscale when important foreign policy issues arise."11 9

These efforts are facilitated by Israel's generally favorable image in theUnited States. As former Senator Warren Rudman (R-NH) once commented,"They have a pretty good product to sell."12 0 As we shall see, that favorableimage is due in good part to the lobby's own efforts to make sure thatIsrael is portrayed favorably, as well as the broad sense that the UnitedStates and Israel are part of a common Judeo-Christian culture and arelinked by various informal connections.12 1

Finally, the lobby benefits from the absence of effective opposition. As onesenator explained, "There's no countervailing sentiment .. . If you vote contraryto the tremendous pressure of AIPAC, nobody says to you, 'That'sgreat.'"12 2 Although Arab Americans are a significant minority, they are neitheras wealthy, well organized, numerous, or politically active as Jewish Americans.As a group, Arab Americans have not been as successful in reachingprominent positions in academia, business, and the media, and they are alsoless visible in politics. This is partly because the main waves of Arab immigrationto the United States occurred relatively recently, and first-generation immigrantsare less affluent, less represented in important professions, lessfamiliar with American mores and institutions, less active in politics, andtherefore less influential than subsequent generations tend to be.

Pro-Arab organizations are also no match for the major groups that makeup the Israel lobby. There are a handful of pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian interestgroups in the United States, but they are smaller than AIPAC and

other pro-Israel organizations, not nearly as well funded, and nowhere nearas effective. According to Mitchell Bard, the former editor of AIPAC's NearEast Report, "From the beginning, the Arab lobby has faced not only a disadvantagein electoral politics but also in organization. There are several politicallyoriented groups, but many of these are one-man operations with littlefinancial or popular support." U.S. politicians rarely, if ever, complain about

pressure from an "Arab-American lobby" and have little reason to adjusttheir behavior to accommodate it. As Harry Truman famously remarked, "Inall of my political experience I don't ever recall the Arab vote swinging aclose election."12 3

Moreover, because Arab Americans come from a variety of countries andbackgrounds, and include Christians as well as Muslims, they are unlikelyto speak with a unified voice on Middle East issues. Indeed, they sometimeshold sharply opposing views. And whereas many Americans sense a degreeof cultural proximity between Israel and the United States and believe Israelisare "like us," Arabs are often seen as part of an alien (or even hostile)civilization. As a result, winning hearts and minds in the United States is anuphill battle for its Arab-American citizens in ways that it has not been forAmerican Jews or their Christian allies. Robert Trice's 1981 assessment ofArab-American groups remains true today: "Their impact on most aspects of

U.S. Middle East policy remains negligible."12 4THE (MODEST) IMPACT OF OIL

Neither Arab governments nor the vaunted "oil lobby" pose a significantcounterweight to the Israel lobby. The belief that oil companies and/orwealthy oil sheikhdoms exert a powerful influence on U.S. Middle East policyis widespread and is reflected in the frequent claim that the war in Iraq in2003 was a "war for oil" and for related corporate interests such as Halliburton.12 5 Interestingly, this view is advanced by some of Israel's most persistentcritics—such as Noam Chomsky and Stephen Zunes—as well as by ferventdefenders like Martin Peretz.12 6 More conspiratorial versions of this perspectivesuggest that personal and financial connections between the Bush familyand the House of Saud have shaped U.S. Middle East policy to America'sdetriment.12 7 These various interpretations portray the Israel lobby as justone player among many, and probably not the most important one.

There is no question that the United States has a major strategic interestin the energy resources located in the Persian Gulf. Although the UnitedStates currently imports more of its energy from Canada, Mexico, andVenezuela than from states in the Middle East, oil and natural gas arebought and sold in a tightly integrated world market and thus anything thatreduces the overall supply is going to push prices up and hurt the Americaneconomy.12 8 As discussed in Chapter 2, this is why U.S. leaders see the PersianGulf as a vital interest and why they have taken steps to preserve a lo

cal balance of power there and prevent any hostile state from interferingwith the flow of oil from that region. This basic fact also explains why theUnited States has sought to preserve good relations with a number of differentcountries in the Gulf, despite differing with them on various domesticand foreign policy issues. The importance of Middle East oil led the UnitedStates to become a close ally of Saudi Arabia after World War II and is onereason why Washington backed the shah of Iran for many years. After hisregime fell in 1979, this same desire to maintain a local balance of powerand to keep the oil flowing convinced the Reagan administration to tilttoward Saddam Hussein's Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88). TheUnited States then intervened to evict Iraq from Kuwait after it seized thesheikhdom in 1990, a policy consistent with the long-standing U.S. policy ofpreventing any single power from establishing hegemony in the region. Apowerful lobby was not needed to encourage these policies, because fewquestioned the need to keep Persian Gulf oil out of unfriendly hands.

Beyond this obvious interest in preserving access to Middle East oil,however, there is little evidence that either wealthy Arab states or a powerful"oil lobby" has had much impact on the broad thrust of U.S. Middle Eastpolicy. After all, if Arab petrodollars or energy companies were driving Americanpolicy, one would expect to see the United States distancing itself fromIsrael and working overtime to get the Palestinians a state of their own.Countries like Saudi Arabia have repeatedly pressed Washington to adopt amore evenhanded position toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but to littleavail, and even wielding the "oil weapon" during the 1973 October Warhad little effect on U.S. support for Israel or on overall American policy inthe region. Similarly, if oil companies were driving U.S. policy, one wouldalso have expected Washington to curry favor with big oil producers likeSaddam Hussein's Iraq, Muammar Gaddafi's Libya, or the Islamic Republicof Iran, so that U.S. companies could make money helping them developtheir energy resources and bringing them to market. Instead, the UnitedStates imposed sanctions on all three of these countries, in sharp oppositionto what the oil industry wanted. Indeed, as we will show in Part II, in somecases the U.S. government deliberately intervened to thwart business dealsthat would have benefited U.S. companies. If the oil lobby were as powerfulas some critics believe, such actions would not have occurred.

Wealthy oil producers such as Saudi Arabia have hired public relationsfirms and professional lobbyists to enhance their image in the United Statesand to lobby for specific arms deals, and their efforts have occasionally bornefruit. Their most notable achievement was convincing Congress to approve

the sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia in 1982, despite AIPAC's strongopposition. This episode is sometimes invoked to demonstrate the Israellobby's limited influence and the power of the "Arab lobby," but the latter'svictory in this case was mostly due to a set of unusually favorable conditions.The strategic importance of Saudi oil was obvious, the Soviet Union was seenas a serious military threat to the Gulf at that time, Ronald Reagan was a popularpresident, and his administration pulled out all the stops to win congressionalapproval. Even so, the sale barely squeaked through (the final Senatevote was 52-48 in favor), and Reagan was forced to withdraw several subsequentarms packages to Saudi Arabia and Jordan in the face of renewed oppositionfrom the lobby and from Congress.12 9

One reason why Arab oil producers have only limited influence is theirlack of an indigenous base of support in the United States. Because they areforced to rely on professional lobbyists and public relations firms, it is easierfor critics to denigrate their representatives as mere agents of a foreign power.AIPAC's Tom Dine once dismissed Saudi lobbying efforts by saying, "Theyhire foreign agents like Fred Dutton to do their bidding. Their support is notrooted in American soil."13 0 The Israel lobby, by contrast, is a manifestationof the political engagement of a subset of American citizens, and so its activitiesare widely and correctly seen as a legitimate form of political activity.

Furthermore, because most oil-exporting governments depend on largerevenues to keep themselves in power, threatening to cut off the supply isnot credible and their leverage is thus reduced. Many of these governmentsalso have sizable investments in Western economies and would suffer considerablelosses in the event of a sustained economic downturn. Reducingproduction would drive prices up and make alternative energy sources moreattractive, and give the United States and other countries a big incentive towean themselves from oil dependence once and for all. Because major oilexporters like Saudi Arabia want to keep the industrial powers hooked on oiland gas, they have an obvious disincentive to using what little leverage maybe at their disposal. As a result, U.S. dependence on imported energy supplieshas not given these countries much influence over U.S. policy.

What about energy companies? These corporations do engage in plentyof lobbying activities, but their efforts in recent decades have focused almostentirely on their commercial interests rather than on broader aspectsof foreign policy. Specifically, energy companies concentrate on tax policy,government regulation, environmental concerns, access to potential drillingsites, and other practical dimensions of energy policy For them, foreign policyis normally a secondary concern, and according to Robert Trice, their

"primary goal .. . is to create a political and economic environment in theMiddle East that will allow them to maximize profits. As such, the politicalinterests of corporate actors are generally much narrower than those of thepro-Arab groups."13 1

This relatively narrow focus is apparent when one examines the websiteof the American Petroleum Institute, the flagship trade association of the oilindustry. Five topics appear under the general heading of "policy issues": climatechange, exploration/production, fuels, taxes and trade, and homelandsecurity. There is no reference to "Israel" or the "Arab-Israeli conflict" anywhereon the site, and few references to foreign policy at all. By contrast, Israeland U.S. foreign policy are front and center on the websites of AIPAC,the ADL, and the Conference of Presidents.132 As AIPAC s Morris Amitaynoted in the early 1980s, "When oil interests and other corporate interestslobby, 99 percent of the time they are acting in what they perceive to be theirown self-interest—they lobby on tax bills . . . We very rarely see them lobbyingon foreign policy issues .. . In a sense, we have the field to ourselves."13 3

In addition, American corporations appear to be discouraged from trying toinfluence U.S. Middle East policy by the fear of retaliation from well-organizedpro-Israel groups. In 1975, for example, the revelation that Gulf Oil hadunderwrittena number of pro-Arab activities in the United States led to public condemnationsby the Conference of Presidents and the Anti-Defamation League.In response, Gulf bought a half-page ad in the New York Times in which itapologized for its action and told readers, "You may be certain it will not happenagain." As Trice notes, "A vigilant, sensitive, and reactive pro-Israel lobbyis one reason why U.S. corporations have tended to avoid direct participationin domestic political debates on Middle East questions."13 4

Some commentators believe that oil and gas companies are driving U.S.policy either to gain lucrative concessions in places like Iraq, or to fomentinstability that will drive up oil prices and enable them to reap windfall profits.13 5 Not only is there little direct evidence of such behavior, but it runscounter to the long-term interests of major energy companies. Energy companiesdo not like wars in oil-rich regions, sanctions, or regime change—thestaples of U.S. Middle East policy in recent years—because each of themthreatens access to oil and gas reserves and thus their ability to

make money,and such events also encourage Americans to think more seriously aboutreducing demand for the oil companies' main product. Thus, when VicePresident Dick Cheney was the president of Halliburton, Inc., a major oilservices firm, in the 1990s, he opposed U.S. sanctions on Iran (a policy, asdiscussed in Chapter 10, driven largely by the lobby) and complained that

U.S. firms were being "cut out of the action" by America's "sanctions happy"policy.13 6 Cheney's earlier position suggests that if oil companies controlledMiddle East policy, the United States would have pursued a very differentagenda in recent years.None of this denies that oil companies, good capitalists that they are,will seek to profit from foreign policy initiatives that they did not encourage.It is not surprising that oil companies want to obtain lucrative concessionsin post-Saddam Iraq, just as they would have been happy to do businesswith Saddam himself. On balance, however, wealthy Arab governments andthe oil lobby exert much less influence on U.S. foreign policy than the Israellobby does, because oil interests have less need to skew foreign policy in thedirections they favor and they do not have the same leverage.13 7 Writing inthe early 1970s, the Columbia University professor and former AssistantSecretary of State Roger Hilsman observed, "It is obvious to even the mostcasual observer . . . that United States foreign policy in the Middle East,where oil reigns supreme, has been more responsive to the pressures of theAmerican Jewish community and their natural desire to support Israel thanit has to American oil interests." In his comparison of the Israel and Arablobbies, Mitchell Bard acknowledges that although oil companies likeAramco have conducted lobbying campaigns in the past, the effort "has had

no observable impact on U.S. policy." Or as AIPAC's former legislative director,Douglas Bloomfield, told BBC News in 2003, "AIPAC has one enormousadvantage. It really doesn't have any opposition."13 8

THE QUESTION OF "DUAL LOYALTY"

This picture of a powerful special interest group, comprised mainly of AmericanJews and working to move U.S. policy in a pro-Israel direction, is boundto make some people uncomfortable, because it seems to invoke the specterof "dual loyalty," which was once a common anti-Semitic canard in old Europe.The charge, in its original incarnation, was that Jews in the diasporawere perpetual aliens who could not assimilate and become good patriots.According to this now-discredited argument, Jews were thought to be loyalonly to each other. The infamous Protocols of the Elders ofZion, a tsarist forgerythat was exposed and discredited long ago, claimed that Jews operate asa fifth column in the countries where they live, working for a committee ofJewish elders who are secretly plotting to dominate the world.

In this earlier, anti-Semitic incarnation, dual loyalty was in fact a mis

nomer, as the charge implied that Jews were loyal only to each other and feltno genuine loyalty to their home countries. Today, however, both scholarsand commentators use the term in a neutral and nonpejorative fashion todescribe the widespread circumstance where individuals feel genuine attachments(or loyalties) to more than one country. Thus, in his recent comparisonof different ethnic diasporas, the Israeli political scientist GabrielSheffer distinguishes among "total," "dual," and "divided" loyalty, and notesthat all three responses occur when members of a particular ethnic, national,or religious group are scattered across different states.13 9 As discussedbelow, other thoughtful Jewish Americans have used "dual loyalty" todescribe their own attitudes and experiences, but their use of the term isvery different from its past employment as an anti-Semitic slander.

Any notion that Jewish Americans are disloyal citizens is wrong. We fullyagree with Malcolm Hoenlein, who directs the Conference of Presidents,that "it is safe to say that American Jews are among the most patriotic andloyal of American citizens."14 0 As we have made

clear, those who lobby on Israel'sbehalf are acting in ways that are consistent with long-standing politicaltraditions. Indeed, political life in the United States has long proceededfrom the assumption that all individuals have a variety of attachments andloyalties—to country, religion, family, employer, just to name a few—andthat American citizens will create formal and informal associations that reflectthose loyalties and interests. Consider, for example, a 2006 Pew GlobalAttitudes survey of Christians in thirteen countries in which 42 percent ofthe U.S. respondents saw themselves as Christians first and Americans second.14 1 These different attachments, which sometimes include an affinityfor a foreign country, may reflect ancestry, religious affiliation, personalexperience(such as overseas study or a Peace Corps assignment), or any numberof other sources. It is legitimate for U.S. citizens to express suchattachments and affinities in political life; this is in fact what democratictheory implies that they should do. As we have noted, it is even permissiblefor Americans to hold dual citizenship and to serve in foreign armies—including the IDF—and some have done so.

Americans who work to influence U.S. foreign policy in ways that benefitIsrael almost always believe that the policies they favor will benefit theUnited States as well. As former AIPAC executive director Tom Dine toldone interviewer, "I came to this job thinking American foreign policy andhow to strengthen America's position in the world. At the same time, Ithought a lot about Israel because I am Jewish."14 2 More to the point,Theodore Mann, a former head of the Conference of Presidents, said in

2001 that "leading American Jews really feel very deeply that American interests

and Israeli interests are one and the same."14 3

While there is no question that this perspective is widely and deeply held,there is a problem with it: no two countries will always have the same interests.It is just not the way international politics works. There have been instancesin the past, and there will be more in the future, where U.S. andIsraeli interests were at odds. For example, it made good strategic sense forIsrael to acquire nuclear weapons in the 1960s, but it was not in America's interestto have Israel go nuclear. Nor is it in the U.S. national interest whenIsrael kills or wounds innocent Palestinian civilians (even if only unintentionally)and especially not when it uses American-made weapons to do it.One sees a similar divergence of interests in Israel's decision to invadeLebanon in 1982, and in its recent opposition to U.S. plans to sell advancedweaponry to Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states.14 4

Nonetheless, many of Israel's supporters find it hard to acknowledge thatJerusalem and Washington could have fundamentally different interests. Inother words, they fully accept the strategic and moral rationales that we laidout and refuted in Chapters 2 and 3, and they work hard to convince policymakers of their continued validity. They may also hold to these views becausehumans are usually uncomfortable when important values conflict. Evenwhen U.S. and Israeli interests are clearly at odds, some of Israel's Americanbackers will find it difficult to acknowledge that a significant tradeoff exists.

There are, however, thoughtful Jewish Americans—including someprominent policy makers—who openly acknowledge that conflicts can anddo arise among their Jewish identities, their understandable interest in Israel'swell-being, and their genuine loyalty to the United States. To hiscredit, Henry Kissinger dealt forthrightly with this issue in his memoirs,writing that "though not practicing my religion, I could never forget that thirteenmembers of my family had died in Nazi concentration camps . . . MostIsraeli leaders were personal friends. And yet .. . I had to subordinate myemotional preferences to my perception of the national interest .. . It wasnot always easy; occasionally it proved painful."14 5

Kissinger acknowledges what many would deny: tensions are bound toarise whenever Americans have strong affinities for other countries, no matterwhat the origins of those attachments and no matter how consistently they resolvethem on behalf of their

homeland. Or as one of Bill Clinton's MiddleEast advisers admitted anonymously, "We act in America's interest, butthrough a prism." Another veteran Jewish-American diplomat expressed a sim

ilar feeling by saying, "I thank God that I'm not working in Middle East affairsor at the U.N., where you might have to vote to condemn the Israelis."14 6

These statements are in no sense confessions of disloyalty; on the contrary,they are admirably honest reflections on the multiple loyalties that allhuman beings feel and that sometimes come into conflict. The journalistEric Alterman offered an equally candid acknowledgment in 2003, notingthat his own "dual loyalties" were "drilled into me by my parents, my grandparents,my Hebrew school teachers and my rabbis, not to mention Israeliteen-tour leaders and AIPAC college representatives." But instead of pretendingthat potential tradeoffs will never arise, Alterman recognizes that"we ought to be honest enough to at least imagine a hypothetical clash betweenAmerican and Israeli interests. Here, I feel pretty lonely admittingthat, every once in a while, I'm going to go with what's best for Israel."14 7

Yet Alterman is not in fact alone. Consider the remarks of Stephen Steinlight,former director of national affairs at the American Jewish Committee.After recounting his own upbringing in America as a "Jewish nationalist,even a quasi-separatist," Steinlight remarks,

The process of my nationalist training was to inculcate the belief thatthe primary division of the world was between "us" and "them." Ofcourse we saluted the American and Canadian flags and sang thoseanthems, usually with real feeling, but it was clear where our primaryloyalty was meant to reside. I am also familiar with the classic, wellhoned

answer to this tension anytime this is cited: Israel and Americaare democracies; they share values; they have common strategicinterests; loyalty to one cannot conceivably involve disloyalty to theother, etc., etc. All of which begs huge questions . . . and while it maybe true in practice most of the time, it is by no means an absoluteconstruct, devoid of all sort of potential exceptions . . . We have noless difficult a balancing act between group loyalty and a wider senseof belonging to America. That America has largely tolerated this dualloyalty—we get a free pass, I suspect, largely over Christian guiltabout the Holocaust —makes it no less a reality.14 8

It is important to emphasize that this phenomenon is not confined toJewish Americans; rather, such tensions are an inevitable feature of a meltingpot society that has drawn its citizens from all over the world.14 9 It isequally important to note that most American Jews would surely reject any

suggestion that they would place Israel's interests ahead of America's if anobvious conflict arose between them.

Jews and non-Jews who believe that the United States should continueto give Israel strong and unconditional support have every right to advocatetheir positions, and it is wrong to question their loyalty when they do. Yet itis equally legitimate for critics to point out that organizations like AIPAC arenot neutral, or that the individuals who run AIPAC, the ADL, the Conferenceof Presidents, and similar organizations are motivated by an attachmentto Israel that is bound to shape their thinking about many foreignpolicy issues. Why else would Malcolm Hoenlein describe his job as follows:"I devote myself to the security of the Jewish state"?15 0 Or why doesJohn Hagee of CUFI address the potential conflict between his support forIsraeli settlements and official U.S. opposition to them by saying that "thelaw of God transcends the laws of the United States government and the

U.S. State Department"?15 1 If he were not inspired by a strong attachmentto Israel, why would Lenny Ben-David, the former director of informationand research at AIPAC, agree to serve as Israel's deputy chief of mission inWashington from 1997 to 2000? 15 2It is equally legitimate to question whether the policies advocated bythese individuals and the organizations they represent are in the U.S. nationalinterest, just as it is legitimate to question the impact of other specialinterest lobbies on other elements of U.S. domestic or foreign policy. Theirpatriotism can be above reproach, but their advice might

be fostering policiesthat are wreaking havoc in a region of considerable strategic importanceto the United States and indeed to the rest of the world. To question thesoundness of that advice has nothing to do with the older, discredited use of"dual loyalty" to imply that Jews were unpatriotic.

CONCLUSION

The Israel lobby is the antithesis of a cabal or conspiracy; it operates out inthe open and proudly advertises its own clout. In its basic operations, the Israellobby is no different from interest groups like the farm lobby, steel andtextile workers, and a host of ethnic lobbies, although the groups and individualswho comprise the Israel lobby are in an unusually favorable positionto influence U.S. foreign policy. What sets it apart, in short, is its extraordinaryeffectiveness. In the next two chapters, we examine the strategies itemploys to achieve its goals.

5

GUIDING THE POLICY PROCESS

The groups and individuals who make up the lobby pursue two broad strategiesto encourage steadfast U.S. support for Israel. First, they exert significantinfluence on the policy-making process in Washington. Second, theseorganizations go to considerable lengths to ensure that public discourse

about Israel is favorable and that it echoes the strategic and moral rationalesdiscussed in Chapters 2 and 3. We examine the first of these strategies inthis chapter and explore the lobby's efforts to shape public discourse inChapter 6.

Because political power in the United States is divided between the legislativeand executive branches, the lobby's tactics sometimes vary dependingon which branch of government is involved. In addition to helping getsympathetic individuals elected or appointed to key positions, groups in thelobby strive to shape the political calculations of officials who might betempted to chart a more independent course. Whatever a legislator's or policymaker's personal views might be, the lobby wants uncritical support forIsrael to be the "smart" political choice. Like other powerful interest groups,in short, the Israel lobby achieves its aims by constraining the policies keyofficials are willing to consider, pressing them to take steps they wouldrather avoid (but will pretend to favor), making it hard for U.S. leaders tosustain initiatives that groups in the lobby oppose, and shaping perceptionsand framing options so that many key leaders willingly favor the policies thatthese groups endorse.1

HOLDING SWAY ON CAPITOL HILL

A key pillar of the lobby's effectiveness is its influence in the U.S. Congress.Unlike virtually every other country, Israel is largely immune from criticismon Capitol Hill. This situation is remarkable by itself, because Congress frequentlydeals with contentious issues and competing viewpoints are usuallyeasy to find. Whether the issue is abortion, arms control, affirmative action,gay rights, the environment, trade policy, health care, immigration, or welfare,there is almost always a lively debate on Capitol Hill. But where Israelis concerned, potential critics fall silent and there is hardly any debate at all.

The absence of serious deliberation when Israel is involved was revealedin a hearing on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process held on February 14,2007, by the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia in theHouse of Representatives. With Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tryingto restart the moribund peace process, the subcommittee sought testimonyfrom three witnesses. Despite some differences on certain policy issues, allthree are central players in the lobby: Martin Indyk, the former AIPAC officialand former U.S. ambassador to Israel who now heads the Saban Centerfor Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; David Makovsky of thepro-Israel

Washington Institute for Near East Policy; and the neoconservativepundit Daniel Pipes, who directs the right-wing Middle East Forum. Nocritic of Israel, much less a Palestinian or Arab American, was brought into offer alternative views or suggest the United States take a different approach.M. J. Rosenberg, who once worked for AIPAC and is now a key figurewith the Israel Policy Forum, a moderate pro-Israel group that activelysupports a two-state solution, nicely summed up the situation: "This was ahearing about two sides of a conflict where only one side was allowed tospeak," adding that "everyone who saw an official Congressional hearingthat banned the Arab point of view was either hurt by the spectacle or angeredby it. And that damages the interests of America, and of Israel."2

One reason for the lobby's success in Congress is that some key membershave been Christian Zionists, such as former House Speaker RichardArmey, who said in September 2002 that "my No. 1 priority in foreign policyis to protect Israel." One would think that the top priority for any U.S.representative would be to "protect America," but that is not what Armeysaid. Regarding Tom DeLay, Armey's successor as speaker, Morton Klein,the president of ZOA, said that "he cared about Israel in every fiber of hisbeing." DeLay himself said that he was "an Israeli at heart."3

There are also Jewish senators and representatives who work to make

U.S. foreign policy support Israel's interests. In 2006, in fact, a record numberof Jewish Americans were elected to the House and Senate, a fact that

underscores their impressive achievements in American society and theirtraditionally high level of civic engagement and political participation.4Some of these legislators—such as Senators Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) andCharles Schumer, and Representatives Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Henry Wax-man (D-CA), and Robert Wexler (D-FL)—are ardent defenders of Israel.5Indeed, Waxman said in the wake of the 2006 election that "there will besome Democratic chairmen who may not share all my views .. . on Israel."He made it clear, however, that "they will not be chairing committees dealingwith Israel and the Middle East."6 He was right, of course: the chair ofthe House subcommittee that held the hearing described above was GaryAckerman (D-NY), another avid backer of Israel, while the chair of thelarger Committee on Foreign Affairs is Tom Lantos (D-CA), who has no rivalon Capitol Hill in his devotion to Israel. As one former AIPAC leader putit, Lantos "is true blue and white."7But it isn't only the representatives themselves who can tilt legislation ina pro-Israel direction. Congressional staffers are at the center of the legislativeprocess, registering the positions of outside interest groups and parsingdifferent policy options for their bosses. As Morris Amitay, a former head ofAIPAC, once noted, "There are a lot of guys at the working level up here [onCapitol Hill] . . . who happen to be Jewish, who are willing .. . to look atcertain issues in terms of their Jewishness . . . These are all guys who are ina position to make the decision in these areas for those senators . . . You canget an awful lot done just at the staff level."8 As discussed below, representativesfrom groups in the lobby sometimes participate directly in thisprocess, helping Hill staffers draft legislation, providing them with talkingpoints that legislators can use in public, helping write the "Dear Colleague"letters that legislators send one another to position themselves on key issues,and drafting and circulating open letters designed to put congressionalpressure on the executive branch.

Of all the groups that make up the lobby, it is AIPAC that holds the keyto influence in Congress, a fact that is widely acknowledged by politiciansfrom both parties.9 Bill Clinton once described AIPAC as "stunningly effective"and "better than anyone else lobbying in this town," while formerHouse Speaker Newt Gingrich called it "the most effective general-interestgroup . . . across the entire planet." Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid(D-NV) agrees, saying, "I can't think of a policy organization in the countryas well-organized and respected [as AIPAC]." The New Yorker's Jeffrey Gold

berg calls it "a leviathan among lobbies," and AIPAC's own website proudlyquotes the New York Times s assessment that it is "the most important organizationaffecting America's relationship with Israel."1 0

AIPAC's success is due in large part to its ability to reward legislators andcongressional candidates who support its agenda and to punish those whodo not, based mainly on its capacity to influence campaign contributions.Money is critical to U.S. elections, which have become increasingly expensiveto win, and AIPAC makes sure that its friends get financial support solong as they do not stray from AIPAC's line.

This process works in several ways. To begin with, many of the same individualswho bankroll AIPAC are often important political contributors intheir own right. Using data from the Federal Election Commission (FEC),the journalist Michael Massing found that "between 1997 and 2001, the 46members of AIPAC's board of directors gave well in excess of $3 million incampaign contributions," and many of them remain generous donors to pro-Israel PACs and candidates today.11 "Since 2000," the Washington Post reportedin 2004, "[AIPAC] board members have contributed an average of$72,000 each to campaigns and political committees."1 2

Second, AIPAC helps connect political candidates to other donors andsources of funds. Despite its name, AIPAC is not a political action committeeand does not officially endorse candidates or give money directly to theircampaigns. Instead, AIPAC screens potential candidates and arrangesmeetings with potential donors and fund-raisers, and provides informationto the growing number of pro-Israel PACs. According to the historian DavidBiale, "The American Jewish 'Israel lobby' has developed since the Six Day

War into one of the most sophisticated and effective lobbying organizationsin the United States Congress. It has done so in part by developing a nationalnetwork of Jewish Political Action Committees for contributing fundsto congressional candidates based on the criterion of support for Israel."1 3 AsAIPAC President Howard Friedman told the organization's members in August2006, "AIPAC meets with every candidate running for Congress. Thesecandidates receive in-depth briefings to help them completely understandthe complexities of Israel's predicament and that of the Middle East as a whole.We even ask each candidate to author a 'position paper' on their views of theU.S.-Israel relationship—so it's clear where they stand on the subject."1 4

Friedman's description of AIPAC's modus operandi is consistent withtestimony from other political figures. Tom Hayden, the antiwar figure whowas running for a seat in the California Assembly in the early 1980s, explainshow he won support from the local power broker Michael Berman

(brother of longtime California Congressman Howard Berman) on the conditionthat he would always be a "good friend to Israel." Hayden, who wonthe election, notes that he "had to be certified 'kosher,' not once but over andover again. The certifiers were the elites, beginning with rabbis and heads ofthe multiple mainstream Jewish organizations . . . An important vetting rolewas held as well by . . . [AIPAC], a group closely associated with official partiesin Israel. When necessary, Israeli ambassadors, counsels general andother officials would intervene with statements declaring someone a 'friendof Israel.'" Hayden, one may note, merely held state-level offices in his politicalcareer, although he was unusually visible in that role.1 5

In the same vein, Harry Lonsdale, the Democratic candidate who ranunsuccessfully against Senator Mark Hatfield (R-OR) in 1990, has describedhis own visit to AIPAC headquarters during that campaign. "Theword that I was pro-Israel got around," he writes. "I found myself invited toAIPAC in Washington, D.C., fairly early in the campaign, for 'discussions.'It was an experience I will never forget. It wasn't enough that I was pro-Israel. I was given a list of vital topics and quizzed (read grilled) for myspecificopinion on each. Actually, I was told what my opinion must be, andexactly what words I was to use to express those opinions in public . . . Shortlyafter that encounter at AIPAC, I

was sent a list of American supporters of Israel. . . that I was free to call for campaign contributions. I called; theygave, from Florida to Alaska."1 6

Former Idaho governor John V. Evans tells a similar story about his 1986campaign against incumbent Idaho Senator Steven Symms. He visitedAIPAC headquarters, where, according to Evans, they "emphasized constantlythat they were not a PAC (political action committee) . . . But theynoted that there were Jewish organizations all over the country that had theirown PACs and that if we could contact them, they would be able to helpus." According to the Wall Street Journal, AIPAC "steered Mr. Evans to a seriesof supposedly independent organizations—many of them run by peoplewith ties to AIPAC—that gave him $204,950 for his losing race against RepublicanSen. Steve Symms."1 7

AIPAC also keeps track of congressional voting records and makes theserecords available to its members, so that they can decide which candidatesor PACs to support.1 8 Candidates or incumbents who are seen as hostile toIsrael, on the other hand, can expect AIPAC to guide campaign contributionstoward their opponents. Internal AIPAC documents acquired by theWashington Post in 1988 revealed that its deputy political director was actively"trying to help raise money for several candidates in the 1986 Senate

race," and the Wall Street Journal reported in 1987 that "despite AIPAC'sclaims of non-involvement in political spending, no fewer than 51 pro-IsraelPACs—most of which draw money from Jewish donors and operate underobscure-sounding names—are operated by AIPAC officials or people whohold seats on AIPAC's two major policymaking bodies."1 9 Although the Federal

Election Commission later ruled that there was "insufficient evidence"to conclude that AIPAC controlled the network of pro-Israel PACs, the beliefthat AIPAC helps guide contributions remains widespread.20 The veterandiplomat David Newsom, who served as assistant secretary of state in theNixon administration and as undersecretary of state under Jimmy Carter,reports that "when a prominent member of Congress was once asked thereason for the power of AIPAC in the legislature, he replied, 'Money. It's assimple as that.'"2 1

The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP), a nonpartisan research groupthat tracks campaign contributions, has identified roughly three dozen pro-Israel PACs active in recent elections. In the 2006 midterms, these groupsgave more than $3 million to candidates from both parties.2 2 Between 1990and 2004, reports the Economist, pro-Israel groups contributed nearly $57million to candidates and parties, while Arab-American and Muslim PACscontributed slightly less than $800,000.2 3 When combined with individualcontributions to particular candidates and donations given to the nationalparty organizations themselves, pro-Israel forces wield considerable electoralclout. According to CRP's Steven Weiss, "If you are a candidate andyou get the pro-Israel label from AIPAC, the money will start coming in fromcontributors all over the country."24

There is little doubt about the potency of these tactics. In 2006, for example,money from pro-Israel groups and individuals helped Senator JosephLieberman retain his seat by running independently following his defeat byNed Lamont in the Democratic primary. Lieberman received a total of morethan $145,000 from two dozen different pro-Israel PACs, and none of thesegroups helped Lamont. In the same year, $76,000 worth of pro-Israel PACcontributions helped Sheldon Whitehouse defeat incumbent Senator LincolnChaffee (R-RI), who had long been regarded as lukewarm on Israel.2 5Other beneficiaries of pro-Israel PAC support include successful candidatessuch as Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Brad Ellsworth (D-IN). According toRon Kampeas of the Jewish Telegraph Agency, the money for these (andother candidates) was "raised by a loose network of donors, many of whomhave strong ties to [AIPAC], the pro-Israel lobby."26

AIPAC and its related network cannot influence every election, of

course, and even large donations from pro-Israel groups could not

get Lonsdaleor Evans elected or prevent former Senate Minority Leader TomDaschle (D-SD) or incumbent Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA) from beingdefeated in their respective bids for reelection in 2004 and 2006. 2 7 But overthe past three decades it has helped many successful candidates win theirraces, while driving from office a number of individuals it considered unfriendlyto Israel. In 2002, for example, it helped defeat CongresswomanCynthia McKinney (D-GA) by funneling campaign money to her opponents.McKinney returned to office in 2004 but was again defeated for reelectionin 2006. Hank Johnson, her victorious opponent in the 2006Democratic primary, received at least $34,000 from seven pro-IsraelPACs.2 8 In another well-known case, wealthy Chicago businessman and formerAIPAC President Robert Asher helped recruit and vet an Illinois attorney,Richard Durbin, to run against incumbent Congressman Paul Findley(R-IL) in 1982. Durbin had never held elected office, and as Asher later recalled,"I probed [Durbin's] views .. . I wanted to make sure we were supportingsomeone who was not only against Paul Findley but also a friend ofIsrael. He beat Findley with a lot of help from Jews, in-state and out-ofstate.Now, how did the Jewish money find him? I traveled around the countrytalking about how we had the opportunity to defeat someone unfriendlyto Israel. And the gates opened."2 9 Asher solicited funds with a letter topotentialdonors declaring that the election was the "best chance" to remove a"dangerous enemy of Israel" from Congress, and Durbin eventually receiveda total of $104,325 in campaign funds from thirty-one different pro-IsraelPACs. By way of comparison, in the 1982 election, other Illinois congressionalcandidates received an average of about $3,700 from the samegroups.3 0 Durbin went on to narrowly beat Findley, who had served elevenprevious terms, and he later won election to the Senate, where he currentlyserves as majority whip.

In 2002, Mayer "Bubba" Mitchell, another member of the "Gang ofFour" (the group of wealthy donors that guides AIPAC's policy making),used similar tactics to oust Congressman Earl Hilliard (D-AL). Like Durbin,Hilliard's opponent got financial help from AIPAC supporters across thecountry. According to the New Yorkers Jeffrey Goldberg, Asher later said thathe had "asked Bubba how he felt after [Hilliard's opponent] won, and hesaid 'Just like you did when Durbin got elected.'"3 1 AIPAC has also playedan important role in defeating a number of other politicians who took positionsit disagreed with, including Representative Pete McCloskey (R-CA)and Senators J. William Fulbright (D-AR) and Roger Jepson (R-IA), to name

a few. Jepson's fate is particularly revealing: he was targeted after he succumbedto a personal plea from President Ronald Reagan and agreed to supportthe 1981 sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia. His opponent in the1984 Senate race, Democrat Tom Harkin, received more than $100,000 inpro-Israel PAC money and Jepson lost his seat. Senator Alan Cranston(D-CA) later commented that Jepson's fate "has sort of struck terror into thehearts of senators about switching" on Middle East votes.3 2

Another example of the lobby's ability to influence elections concernsformer Senator Adlai Stevenson (D-IL), who ran for governor of Illinois in1982. He first ran afoul of pro-Israel groups in 1980, when he introduced anamendment to a Senate bill that called for reducing foreign aid to Israel if itdid not stop building settlements. Stevenson knew the amendment wouldnever pass, but he wanted to show that his colleagues would support Israeleven if it was acting in ways that were contrary to official U.S. policy. Themeasure was easily defeated, gaining only seven votes. One reluctant opponentof the amendment, Senator Quentin Burdick (D-ND), told the Illinoissenator, "Sorry, Adlai, but I am up for reelection." When Stevenson ran forgovernor two years later, he quickly discovered that campaign contributionsbegan to dry up, and indeed, went to his opponent. According to the formersenator, he and his wife "were reviled as anti-Semitic. Some in the pressturned hostile. Jewish Democratic Committeemen wilted under pressure.Jewish friends and supporters were also reviled." Stevenson was narrowlydefeated, and as he later said, "the lobby made the difference in that electionmany times over."33

Perhaps the most renowned example of the costs that can befall a

politicianwho crosses AIPAC is the defeat of Senator Charles Percy (R-IL) in1984. Despite a generally pro-Israel voting record, Percy incurred AIPAC'swrath by declining to sign the AIPAC-sponsored "Letter of 76" protestingPresident Ford's threatened "reassessment" of U.S. Middle East policy in1975. He also made the mistake of calling PLO leader Yasser Arafat more"moderate" than some other Palestinian terrorists. Percy's opponents in boththe primary and general election in 1984 received large sums from pro-IsraelPACs, and a businessman from another state (California), Michael Goland,who was also a major contributor to AIPAC, spent $1.1 million on anti-Percyadvertising in Illinois. (Goland was later convicted of making illegal campaigncontributions in the 1986 California Senate race.)3 4 As Tom Dineboasted after Percy's narrow defeat, "All the Jews in America, from coast tocoast, gathered to oust Percy. And the American politicians—those who holdpublic positions now, and those who aspire—got the message."3 5 Dine's hy

perbole notwithstanding, the basic lesson of these cases is hard to miss. As

J. J. Goldberg, the editor of the Forward, said in 2002, "There is this imagein Congress that you don't cross these people or they take you down."3 6AIPAC and pro-Israel PACs focus on more than getting Israel-friendlycandidates elected. They have also had notable success turning politicianswho have been critical of Israel into steadfast supporters. Former SenatorJesse Helms (R-NC) was an outspoken critic of the U.S. foreign aid programfor much of his career, which also meant that he opposed giving substantialaid to Israel. In 1984, however, Helms was in a hard-fought (and expensive)

race for reelection against James Hunt, the popular governor of North Carolina.Sensing an opportunity to put a formidable enemy out of business,AIPAC channeled large amounts of campaign money to Hunt, who camewithin a hair of winning. Helms got the message: he traveled to Israel thefollowing year and had his picture taken with a yarmulke on his head kissingthe Western Wall. The same trip also produced a picture of the senator withAriel Sharon for his office wall. More important, Helms became a vocal supporterof Israel and remained one until his retirement in 2002.3 7

One sees a similar evolution on the part of Senator Hillary Clinton,whose support for Palestinian statehood in 1998 and public embrace ofSuha Arafat (wife of Yasser Arafat) in 1999 provoked strong criticism fromgroups in the lobby. Clinton became an ardent defender of Israel once shebegan running for office herself, and she now gets strong backing, includingfinancial support, from pro-Israel organizations and individuals. After Clintonappeared at a pro-Israel rally in July 2006 and expressed strong supportfor Israel's highly destructive war against Lebanon, Helen Freedman, executivedirector of the hard-line Americans for a Safe Israel, declared, "Ithought her remarks were very good, especially in light of her history, and wecan't forget her kiss to Suha."3 8 Pro-Israel PACs contributed more than $30,000 to Clinton's 2006 reelection campaign, and the Forward reportedin January 2007 that Clinton was "expected to snare the lion's share of theJewish community's substantial political donations in the race for the 2008Democratic Presidential nomination."3 9

If electoral pressure and persuasion don't work, AIPAC has been knownto threaten politicians who appear reluctant to follow its lead.4 0 In 2006, forexample, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN), a liberal with a solidpro-Israel voting record, nonetheless opposed the AIPAC-backed PalestinianAnti-Terrorism Act. The measure, which sought to impose draconianmeasures on the Palestinian Authority in the aftermath of the election ofHamas, was also opposed by the State Department, the Catholic Bishops,

and other pro-Israel groups like Americans for Peace Now and the Israel PolicyForum. Nonetheless, an AIPAC lobbyist told McCollum's chief of staffthat the representative's "support for terrorists will not be tolerated," a threatthat led McCollum to demand an apology from AIPAC chief Howard Kohrand to bar AIPAC representatives from her offices.41

The basic message is clear: any senator or representative who

crossesAIPAC is playing with fire. Although the lobby's efforts are hardly the onlyreason that these defeated candidates faced electoral challenges and eventuallylost (for example, Cynthia McKinney's prospects were also damagedby a much-publicized confrontation with a Capitol Hill security guard, andLincoln Chafee faced an uphill battle given anti-Republican sentiment in2006), its ability to affect a politician's electoral prospects is well known. Asone congressional source put it in 1991, "Voting against Israel has becomelike voting against lumber in Washington state, except AIPAC does it all overthe country."42 And that is why Morris Amitay, the former AIPAC directorwho later served as the organization's treasurer, could say in 2002 that"everyone seems to be very good nowadays," and why Jimmy Carter said inFebruary 2007 that "I don't see any present prospect that any member of theUS Congress, the House or Senate, would say, 'Let's take a balanced positionbetween Israel and the Palestinians and negotiate a peace agreement. '"He added, "It's almost politically suicidal .. . for a member of the Congresswho wants to seek reelection to take any stand that might be interpreted asanti-policy of the conservative Israeli government."4 3

AIPAC's clout also explains why attendance at its annual Policy Conferencehas become a command performance for prominent members of bothparties as well as leading officials from the executive branch. Speakers at the2007 Policy Conference included Vice President Dick Cheney, Speaker ofthe House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid andMinority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and House Minority LeaderJohn Boehner (R-OH). The previous year's speakers included Cheney,Boehner, UN Ambassador John Bolton, Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) andEvan Bayh (D-IN), and Representatives Roy Blunt (R-MO), Shelley Berkley(D-NV), Artur Davis (D-AL), Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), and Robert Wexler, as

well as former senator and presidential hopeful John Edwards. Speakers inother years have included President George W. Bush, Secretaries of StateColin Powell and Condoleezza Rice, former House Speakers DennisHastert (R-IL), Richard Armey, and Newt Gingrich, and a bevy of prominentpro-Israel pundits. It is hard to think of any other lobbying organizationthat is wooed as strenuously by politicians in both parties.

AIPAC's ability to influence elections helps ensure that Israel gets generousaid each year and makes it dangerous for senators or representatives toutter even mild criticisms of Israel's conduct. But its influence on CapitolHill goes even farther. Lobbying groups of all types exercise influence notmerely by direct persuasion and by using campaign contributions to gain access,but also by providing a "legislative subsidy" to sympathetic lawmakersand supplying overworked staffs with direct assistance in analyzing issues,framing legislation, and offering talking points and speeches to give toconstituents.4 4 Not only does every member of Congress receive AIPAC's biweeklynewsletter Near East Report, its personnel are also available to helpstaffers when issues affecting Israel arise. According to Douglas Bloomfield,a former AIPAC staff member, "It is common for members of Congress andtheir staffs to turn to AIPAC first when they need information, before callingthe Library of Congress, the Congressional Research Service, committeestaff or administration experts." More important, he notes that AIPAC is"often called upon to draft speeches, work on legislation, advise on tactics,perform research, collect co-sponsors and marshal votes."4 5 In other words,AIPAC inserts itself directly into the legislative and policy-making processwith considerable frequency, as we explore in more detail in Part II.

To seal the deal, an AIPAC sister organization, the American Israel EducationFoundation (AIEF), funds free congressional trips to Israel itself.These junkets burnish a legislator's pro-Israel credentials and facilitatefund-raising, and also expose him or her to the policy preferences and basicworldview of Israel's leaders. This situation helps explain why about 10 percentof all congressional trips overseas are to Israel, even though it is but oneof the nearly two hundred countries in the world. The Center for Public Integrityreports that AIEF spent nearly $1 million on these visits from January2000 to mid-2005. Not surprisingly, AIPAC and other Jewish groupslobbied hard—and successfully—to make sure that the new ethics rules enactedfollowing

the Jack Abramoff and Tom DeLay scandals did not interferewith these visits.4 6

It is important to emphasize again that AIPAC's activities are similar tothe behavior of other influential lobbies and consistent with the interestgroup tradition of the U.S. political system. In his study Jews and AmericanPolitics, Stephen Isaacs described AIPAC's Morris Amitay as saying, "Whatis important .. . is that none of this is untoward . . . You use the traditionaltactics of the democracy . . . letters, calls."4 7

These "traditional tactics" to influence Congress also enable the lobby toput pressure on the executive branch when it takes actions that are consid

ered to be not in Israels interest. When that happens, the president or cabinetofficial is likely to get a hard-hitting letter from one or both houses ofCongress, signed by most of its members, as President Gerald Ford didwhen he threatened a reassessment of U.S.-Israeli relations in 1975. PresidentBush got a similar letter in April 2002, when he briefly sought to pressureIsrael to end a large-scale military incursion in the OccupiedTerritories. The lopsided percentage of signatories for each of these letters iseloquent testimony to AIPAC's ability to twist arms. As Senator Daniel Inouye(D-HI) commented after signing the letter to Ford in 1975, "It's easierto sign one letter than to answer 5000." Or as Senator John Culver (D-IA)later admitted, "The pressure was just too great. I caved."4 8 Secretary ofState Condoleezza Rice felt the same pressure as she sought to restart thepeace process by visiting the Middle East in March 2007. Just before her

departure, Rice received an AIPAC-sponsored letter signed by seventy-ninesenators, urging her to avoid contact with the new Palestinian "unity government"until it recognized Israel, renounced terror, and agreed to abide byIsraeli-Palestinian agreements.4 9 No wonder former Secretary of StateLawrence Eagleburger once told AIPAC's Tom Dine, "Dine, I deal with youbecause you could hurt me."5 0

The bottom line is that AIPAC, which bills itself as "America's Pro-IsraelLobby," has an almost unchallenged hold on Congress.5 1 One of the threemain branches of the American government is firmly committed to supportingIsrael. Open debate about U.S. policy toward Israel does not occurthere, even though that policy has important consequences for the entireworld. As Senator Ernest Hollings (D-SC) noted as he was leaving office in2004, "You can't have an Israeli policy other than what AIPAC gives youaround here."5 2 Another senator, speaking on condition of anonymity, told aWashington Post reporter in 1991, "My colleagues think AIPAC is a very, verypowerful organization that is ruthless, and very, very alert. Eighty percent ofthe senators here roll their eyes on some of the votes. They know that whatthey're doing isn't what they really believe is right, but why fight on a situationwhere they're liable to get beat up on?"5 3

Small wonder, then, that former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharononce told an American audience, "When people ask me how they can helpIsrael, I tell them—Help AIPAC." His successor, Ehud Olmert, agrees, remarking,"Thank God we have AIPAC, the greatest supporter and friend wehave in the whole world."5 4

GUIDING THE POLICY PROCESS

THE MAKING OF PRO-ISRAEL PRESIDENTS

Whether through influence on Congress or in more direct ways, groups in thelobby also exert significant leverage over the executive branch. American presidentsare not as sensitive to pressure as Congress is, and most of them havetaken positions that Israel or the lobby opposed at one time or another. Butsuch instances are becoming increasingly rare, even though Israel's strategicvalue has declined and some of its actions (such as the continued effort to colonizethe Occupied Territories) are at odds with stated U.S. policy.

Influence over the executive branch derives in part from the impact Jewishvoters have on presidential elections. Despite their small numbers in thepopulation (less than 3 percent), American Jews make

large campaign donationsto candidates from both parties. As presidential adviser and formerWhite House Chief of Staff Hamilton Jordan wrote in a confidential memorandumto President Jimmy Carter, "Wherever there is major politicalfundraising in this country, you will find American Jews playing a significantrole."55 Indeed, the Washington Post once estimated that Democratic presidentialcandidates "depend on Jewish supporters to supply as much as60 percent of the money raised from private sources."5 6 Other estimates arelower, but contributions from Jewish Americans form a substantial share—between 20 and 50 percent—of the contributions made to the Democraticparty and its presidential candidates.5 7 Israel is not the only issue that inspiresthese contributions, of course, but candidates who are perceived ashostile (or even indifferent) to Israel run the risk of seeing some of thesefunds go to their opponents.

Furthermore, Jewish voters have high turnout rates and are concentratedin key states like California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, andPennsylvania, which increases their weight in determining who becomespresident. Although they still favor the Democratic party, their support forDemocratic candidates can no longer be taken for granted. John F. Kennedyreceived 82 percent of the Jewish vote in 1960, for example, but GeorgeMcGovern received only 64 percent in 1972, and Jimmy Carter got a mere45 percent in 1980. In close races, therefore, the so-called Jewish vote cantip the balance in key states. Jeffrey Helmreich of the Jerusalem Center forPublic Affairs exaggerates only slightly when he writes that "American Jewishvoters maintain the potential to be the decisive factor in national electionresults . . . American Jews wield power through their high concentration inkey states and their tendency to behave as a swing vote in ways that set themapart from virtually all other groups in American politics."58 Because Jewish

voters matter in close elections, presidential candidates go to considerablelengths to cultivate their support. Indeed, a 2007 story in the Jerusalem Postreferred to this effort to court Jewish support as "a Washington ritual as reliableas the cherry blossoms."5 9 Candidates are especially eager to appeal toAIPAC and other organizations in the lobby—and not just to Jewish votersas a bloc—because they know that the seal of approval from these prominentorganizations will facilitate fund-raising and encourage higher turnouton their behalf.

Gaining and retaining that support means backing Israel down the line,which is why presidential candidates John Edwards, Mitt Romney, and JohnMcCain all made emphatic pro-Israel speeches to the 2007 Herzliya conference(an annual meeting on Israeli national security organized by the hawkishInstitute for Policy and Strategy). They wanted to avoid the fate thatbefell Howard Dean in the 2004 presidential campaign, when he made themistake of recommending that the United States take a more "even-handedrole" in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In response, one of Dean's rivals for thenomination, Joseph Lieberman, accused him of selling Israel down the riverand labeled his statement "irresponsible."60 Even more remarkably, virtuallyall of the top Democrats in the House of Representatives signed a hardhittingletter to Dean criticizing his comments, and the Chicago Jewish Starreported that "anonymous attackers .. . are clogging the e-mail inboxes ofJewish leaders around the country, warning—without much evidence—thatDean would somehow be bad for Israel."6 1

This worry was absurd, because Dean is in fact an unabashed supporterof Israel.6 2 His campaign cochair was former AIPAC president StevenGrossman, and Dean said his own views on the Middle East more closely reflectedthose of AIPAC than the more moderate Americans for Peace Now.Moreover, Dean's wife is Jewish and his children were raised Jewish as well.Dean wasn't questioning U.S. support for Israel; he had merely suggestedthat to "bring the sides together," Washington should act as an honest broker.This is not a radical idea, but key groups in the lobby do not welcomethe idea of evenhandedness when it comes to the Arab-Israeli conflict.Dean's failure to win the Democratic nomination has many causes, ofcourse, but the incident underscored the potential cost of being anythingless than ardently pro-Israel during a presidential campaign.

GUIDING THE POLICY PROCESS

KEEPING THE ADMINISTRATION IN LINE

Key organizations in the lobby also directly target the administration inpower. The principal mission of the Conference of Presidents is to pressurethe White House when it acts in ways that the Conference opposes, as it didwhen Gerald Ford threatened to reassess U.S. support for Israel, whenGeorge H. W. Bush briefly withheld loan guarantees in 1992, or, as discussedin Chapter 7, when George W. Bush called for the creation of aPalestinian state in the immediate aftermath of September 11.

But there is an even more obvious way to shape an administration's policy:the lobby's goals are served when individuals who share its perspectiveoccupy important positions in the executive branch. In a notorious incidentin 1992, for example, the New York businessman Haim Katz, calling as apotential donor to pro-Israel candidates, secretly taped a phone call withAIPAC President David Steiner. In addition to describing how AIPAC hadhelped direct campaign contributions to friendly politicians, Steiner toldKatz that he had met personally to "cut a deal" with Secretary of State JamesBaker for $3 billion in foreign aid to Israel, plus "a billion dollars in othergoodies that people don't even know about." More to the point, he told Katzthat "we have a dozen people in [Clinton's] campaign, in the headquarters. . . and they're all going to get big jobs." Steiner was forced to resign afterKatz went public, and he later said his statements to Katz were not true,but there is little reason to doubt the thrust of his remarks.6 3 After all,wouldn't any powerful interest group want individuals who shared its viewsto get key appointments in each administration? In fact, plenty of other lobbies

have done exactly that. Former Secretary of the Interior Gale Nortonand Deputy Secretary J. Steven Griles both worked as lobbyists for oil ormining industries prior to their appointments in the Bush administration,for example, and Daniel A. Troy was a lawyer who frequently represented tobaccoand pharmaceutical companies before being appointed chief counselto the Food and Drug Administration in 2001. 6 4

The Israel lobby is no different. As we have noted, the Clinton administration'sMiddle East policy was heavily shaped by officials with close ties toIsrael or to prominent pro-Israel organizations. The two most notable individualsin this regard were Martin Indyk, the former deputy director of researchat AIPAC and cofounder of the pro-Israel Washington Institute forNear East Policy, who served on Clinton's National Security Council, as ambassadorto Israel (1995-97, 2000-01), and as assistant secretary of state(1997-2000); and Dennis Ross, who served as Clinton's special envoy to the

Middle East and joined WINEP after leaving government in 2001.6 5 Theywere among President Clinton s closest advisers at the Camp David summitin July 2000.

Although both Indyk and Ross supported the Oslo peace process and favoredthe creation of a Palestinian state—which led hard-liners to denouncethem unfairly for betraying Israel—they did so only within the limits of whatwould be acceptable to Israeli leaders.6 6 As discussed in Chapter 1, theAmerican delegation at Camp David took most of its cues from Israeli PrimeMinister Ehud Barak, coordinated negotiating positions with Israel in advance,and did not offer its own independent proposals for settling the conflict.Even the "Clinton parameters" presented in December 2000 were lessan independent American proposal than Clinton's summary of where thenegotiations stood and his assessment of the bargaining space within whicha solution might be found. Palestinian negotiators complained that the Israeliswould sometimes present them with a specific proposal, and thenlater the Americans would offer the same idea, only the Americans would labelit a "bridging proposal." As another member of the U.S. team later admitted,Israeli proposals were often "presented [to the Palestinians] as U.S.concepts, not Israeli ones," a subterfuge that fooled no one and reinforcedPalestinian suspicions. Not surprisingly, Palestinian representatives protestedthat they were "negotiating with two Israeli teams—one displaying anIsraeli flag, and

one an American flag."67

The issue is not whether individuals like Indyk or Ross were dedicatedpublic servants acting in what they thought to be the best interest of theUnited States—they surely were. The issue, rather, is whether their wellknownsympathies for Israel made it more difficult for the administration tooperate effectively during the negotiations and made it less inclined to bring

U.S. leverage to bear on the Israeli government, thus reducing the chancesof securing a peace deal. We believe that this situation hampered the entireOslo process, including the abortive Camp David summit.The problem is even more pronounced in the second Bush administration,whose ranks have included staunchly pro-Israel neoconservatives likeElliott Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, Aaron Friedberg, John Hannah,

I. Lewis Libby, William Luti, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and DavidWurmser. As we shall see in Part II, these officials consistently pushed forpolicies favored by Israel and backed by key organizations in the lobby.By the same token, groups in the lobby also try to make sure that peoplewho are seen as critical of Israel do not get important foreign policy jobs. In1987, former AIPAC head Tom Dine told an interviewer that AIPAC was

helping vet presidential advisers, saying, "This is an actual example . . . Oneof the [1988] presidential candidates called us and said 'I will be publiclydeclaring soon, and I am interested in hiring so and so for a top campaign position.Tell me what you think about him.'" Dine said his answer was "thumbsup" in that case, but others are less fortunate.6 8 Jimmy Carter wanted to make

George Ball his first secretary of state, but he knew that Ball was perceivedas critical of Israel and that the lobby would oppose the appointment.6 9 Similarly,Richard Marius, a Harvard lecturer hired in 1995 as Vice President AlGore's chief speechwriter, has said that he was fired before he began work afterthe New Republic publisher Martin Peretz (who was Gore's undergraduatetutor and a close confidant) falsely claimed that Marius was an anti-Semite,based on a book review Marius had published in Harvard Magazine in 1992.70

A few years later, in 2001, when Bruce Riedel left his position handlingMiddle East issues on the National Security Council, the New Republic reportedthat the Pentagon had "held up the appointment of Riedel's designatedsuccessor, the Middle East expert Alina Romanowski, whom Pentagonofficials suspect of being insufficiently supportive of the Jewish state."7 1 Theperson appointed instead was Elliott Abrams, who had previously pleadedguilty to withholding information from Congress during the Iran-contra affair.Abrams is hardly objective about Israel, having previously written in a1997 book that "there can be no doubt that Jews, faithful to the covenantbetween God and Abraham, are to stand apart from the nation in which theylive. It is the very nature of being Jewish to be apart—except in Israel—fromthe rest of the population."72 This is a remarkable comment coming from anindividual who holds a critically important position on Middle East policy inthe U.S. government. "For the government of Israel," wrote Nathan Guttmanin Haaretz, his appointment was "a gift from heaven."7 3

CONCLUSION

Like other foreign policy interest groups, the Israel lobby seeks to influencethe U.S. government through a variety of different channels. It is in a betterposition to do so than most other groups, which is one reason its efforts areso effective. But its efforts are not limited to building influence inside theBeltway. The lobby also strives to shape public discourse about Israel andthe Middle East, so that the American public generally supports a pro-Israelorientation and does not question the merits of unconditional U.S. backing.This second strategy is the subject of the next chapter.

6

DOMINATING

PUBLIC DISCOURSE

One of the lobby's central concerns is to ensure that public discourse aboutIsrael echoes the strategic and moral rationales dissected in Chapters 2 and

3. Its various elements do this by constantly reaffirming Israel's strategicvalue, by repeating one-sided accounts about Israel and its founding, and bydefending Israel's actions in policy debates. The goal is to convince the publicthat America's and Israel's interests and values are one and the same.At the same time, groups in the lobby try to marginalize anyone who criticizesIsraeli policy or challenges the "special relationship," and try to preventthat person's views from getting a fair hearing in the public arena. To do this,the lobby sometimes employs heavy-handed tactics to silence critics, accusingthem of being anti-Israel or anti-Semitic. Channeling public discourse ina pro-Israel direction is critically important, because an open and candiddiscussionof Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories, Israeli history, and thelobby's role in shaping America's Middle East policy might easily lead moreAmericans to question existing policy toward Israel and to call for a relationshipwith Israel that more effectively serves the U.S. national interest.

Accordingly, key elements in the lobby strive to influence discourseabout Israel in the media, think tanks, and academia, because these institutionsare critical to shaping popular opinion. They promote efforts to portrayIsrael in a positive light and they go to considerable lengths to marginalizeanyone who questions Israel's past or present conduct or seeks to cast doubton the merits of unconditional U.S. backing. Pro-Israel forces are well awarethat dominating discussions about the Jewish state is essential to their

agenda. These efforts do not always succeed, of course, but are still remarkablyeffective.

DOMINATING PUBLIC DISCOURSE

THE MEDIA IS THE MESSAGE

A key part of preserving positive public attitudes toward Israel is to ensurethat the mainstream media's coverage of Israel and the Middle East consistentlyfavors Israel and does not call U.S. support into question in any way.While serious criticism of Israel occasionally reaches a large audience acrossthe United States, the American media's coverage of Israel tends to bestrongly biased in Israel's favor, especially when compared with news coveragein other democracies.

This claim might sound to some like the old anti-Semitic accusation that"Jews control the media." It is anything but. There is no question that someJewish Americans, such as Martin Peretz and Mortimer Zuckerman, usetheir positions in the media to advance their views on Israel and the MiddleEast. This behavior is legitimate and unsurprising, as all elites tend to usetheir privileged positions to advance their various interests. More to thepoint, however, there are certainly owners, publishers, editors, columnists,and reporters in the mainstream media who have no special feelings for Israeland would feel comfortable criticizing its policies as well as the UnitedStates-Israel relationship. There are surely even influential individuals whomay be strongly pro-Israel but would nevertheless welcome a more open discourseabout that country.

It is therefore wrong—and objectionable—to argue that Jews or pro-Israel forces "control" the media and what they say about Israel. In fact, thereason that the lobby works so hard to monitor and influence what the mainstreammedia says about Israel is precisely that the lobby does not controlthem. If the media were left to their own devices, they would not serve upas consistent a diet of pro-Israel coverage and commentary. Instead, therewould be a more open and lively discussion about the Jewish state and U.S.policy toward it, as there is in virtually every other democracy in the world.Indeed, that debate is especially lively in Israel itself, the one state whereJews clearly do "control the media."

The lobby's perspective on Israel is widely reflected in the mainstreammedia in part because a substantial number of American commentators whowrite about Israel are themselves pro-Israel. In a 1976 comparison of domesticinterest groups and U.S. Middle East

policy, Robert H. Trice foundthat "one of the most serious political handicaps of pro-Arab groups duringthe 1966-1974 period was their inability to gain support from any of thebest-known and nationally-syndicated columnists." Trice also found that"pro-Israel groups could count on media support not only from national

columnists but also from the editors of some of the country's most widelyread newspapers." Pro-Israel groups were more active shaping media coveragethan pro-Arab groups were; in 1970, for example, the Conference ofPresidents distributed press kits (complete with photos and feature stories)to more than seventeen hundred newspapers and to major wire services. InTrice's words, "At virtually every level of media organization—from localcommunities, syndicated columnists, and major national papers, to the internationalnews services that supply the country with information—pro-Israel groups were more successful than pro-Arab groups at getting theirside of the story transmitted to both the articulate and mass publics."1

Matters have not changed much since then. The debate among MiddleEast pundits, wrote the media critic Eric Alterman in 2002, is "dominatedby people who cannot imagine criticizing Israel." He listed fifty-six "columnistsand commentators who can be counted upon to support Israel reflexivelyand without qualification." Conversely, Alterman identified only fivepundits who consistently criticize Israeli behavior or endorse pro-Arab positions.2 Although some readers subsequently challenged Alterman's coding ofa handful of cases and a few of those he listed are now deceased, the disparity

remains overwhelming and the challenges did not undermine his coreclaim.3

Consider the columnists who have covered the Middle East for the NewYork Times and the Washington Post in recent years. William Safire and thelate A. M. Rosenthal were passionate defenders of Israel (and in Safire'scase, especially favorable toward Ariel Sharon); today, David Brooks consistentlydefends Israel's position. Thomas L. Friedman is more moderate; hehas been critical of some of Israel's policies (and occasionally the lobby itself),but he almost never takes the Palestinians' side or advocates that theUnited States distance itself from Israel. Nicholas D. Kristof is frequentlycritical of various aspects of American foreign policy and wrote one controversialcolumn in March 2007 decrying the lack of serious public discussionof U.S. relations with Israel. But the Middle East is not a frequent theme inhis commentary and he certainly did not take a pro-Palestinian position.4Maureen Dowd has been sharply critical of pro-Israel neoconservatives, butlike Kristof, she rarely writes about the Jewish state or U.S. policy toward it.No one in the Times's stable of regular columnists is a consistent defenderof the Palestinians, or even as evenhanded as former columnist AnthonyLewis, who retired in 2001.

As for the Washington Post, it has had several columnists in recent yearswho consistently supported Israel: Jim Hoagland, Robert Kagan, Charles

Krauthammer, and George Will. It used to feature two others: the lateMichael Kelly and William Kristol, who runs the Weekly Standard and has acolumn in Time. Not only were these individuals staunchly pro-Israel, theytended to favor the ideas and policies of the hawkish Likud party rather thanIsraeli moderates. Richard Cohen also writes about the Middle East for thePost, but he has the same profile as the Times's Friedman: attached to Israelbut willing to offer qualified and intelligent criticism. Neither of these papers—which are arguably the two most influential daily newspapers in theUnited States—employs any full-time commentator who consistently favorsthe Arab or Palestinian side.

In recent years, the only prominent columnist who has frequently criticizedIsrael is Robert Novak, whose column is syndicated by the ChicagoSun-Times and regularly appears in the Post. Still, Novak is hardly a championof the Palestinian cause. The fact is that the "other side" has no equivalentof Safire and Krauthammer, or even Friedman

and Cohen, at either theTimes or the Post, or any other major American newspaper, for that matter.The Los Angeles Times, for example, regularly publishes three opinioncolumnists who are staunch defenders of Israel: Max Boot, Jonathan Chait,and Jonah Goldberg. It employs no columnist who is critical of Israel, muchless anyone who routinely defends the Palestinians against the Israelis.

Although these papers occasionally publish guest op-eds that challengeIsraeli policy, the balance of opinion clearly favors Israel. There is no Americancommentator comparable to a Robert Fisk or a Patrick Seale, who areoften sharply critical of Israel and who publish regularly in British newspapers,and no one remotely like Israeli commentators Amira Hass, Akiva Eldar,Gideon Levy, and Bradley Burston, all of whom are openly critical ofparticular policies that their country pursues. The point here is not thatthese individuals are always right and pro-Israel commentators are wrong;the point is that voices like theirs are almost entirely absent from majorAmerican newspapers.

Not surprisingly, this pro-Israel bias is also reflected in newspaper editorials.Robert Bartley, the late editor of the Wall Street Journal, once remarked,"Shamir, Sharon, Bibi—whatever those guys want is pretty muchfine by me."5 The Journal, along with other prominent newspapers like theChicago Sun-Times, the New York Sun, and the Washington Times, regularlyruns editorials that read as if they were written by the Israeli prime minister'spress office. To its credit, the New York Times s editorials sometimes criticizeIsraeli policies, and in recent years, the criticism has occasionally beenstrongly worded. The Times recognizes that the Palestinians have legitimate

grievances and a right to have their own state. Still, its treatment of the twosides over the years has not been evenhanded.6 In his memoirs, formerTimes executive editor Max Frankel recounted the impact his own pro-Israelattitudes had on his editorial choices: "I was much more deeply devoted toIsrael than I dared to assert . . . Fortified by my knowledge of Israel and myfriendships there, I myself wrote most of our Middle East commentaries. Asmore Arab than Jewish readers recognized, I wrote them from a pro-Israelperspective."7

Magazines like Commentary, the New Republic, and the Weekly Standardalso zealously defend Israel at every turn. Indeed, Commentary's former editor,Norman Podhoretz, once told a gathering of journalists in Jerusalemthat "the role of Jews who write in both the Jewish and general press is to defendIsrael, and not join in the attacks on Israel."8 Martin Peretz, the longtimeeditor of the New Republic, once proclaimed, "I am in love with thestate of Israel," and admitted that "there's a sort of party line on Israel" at hisjournal.9

The media's reporting of news events involving Israel is less slanted thantheir editorial commentary, in part because most reporters strive to be objective,but also because it is difficult to cover events in the Occupied Territoriesor in southern Lebanon without acknowledging Israel's actual behavior.But still, to discourage unfavorable reporting on Israel, groups in the lobbyorganize letter-writing campaigns, demonstrations, and boycotts againstnews outlets whose content they consider anti-Israel. As the Forward reportedin April 2002, "Rooting out perceived anti-Israel bias in the mediahas become for many American Jews the most direct and emotional outletfor connecting with the conflict 6,000 miles away."10 One CNN executivehas said that he sometimes gets six thousand e-mail messages in a single daycomplaining that a story is anti-Israel, and papers such as the Chicago Tribune,the Los Angeles Times, the Miami Herald, the New York Times, thePhiladelphia Inquirer, and the Washington Post have faced consumer boycottsover their Middle East reporting.11 One correspondent told the journalistMichael Massing that newspapers were "afraid" of AIPAC and otherpro-Israel groups, saying that "the pressure from these groups is relentless.Editors would just as soon not touch them."1 2 As the former spokesman forthe Israeli consulate in New York, Menachem Shalev, once put it, "Ofcourse, a lot of self-censorship goes on. Journalists, editors, and politiciansare going to think twice about criticizing Israel if they know they are going toget thousands of angry calls in a matter of hours. The Jewish lobby is goodat orchestrating pressure."1 3

America's Jewish press is not exempt from pressure, either. In 1989, forexample, AIPAC's media director, Toby Dershowitz, asked Andrew Carroll,the editor of Washington Jewish Week, not to assign the reporter Larry Cohlerto an ongoing story about AIPAC, because his earlier reports—which hadbeen somewhat critical of AIPAC—were supposedly "inaccurate." WhenCohler received the assignment anyway, Dershowitz and AIPAC legal counselDavid Ifshin called Carroll. Ifshin said that if Cohler remained on the assignment,AIPAC would reexamine his earlier stories "with an eye towardlitigation." This not-too-subtle attempt to pressure Carroll did not succeed,but in 1991, AIPAC's foreign policy director, Steven Rosen, sent severalboard members of Washington Jewish Week an internal AIPAC memorandumarguing that Carroll was too sympathetic to the political left and"sought to bring down the organized Jewish community." In April 1992, anew editor with no professional newspaper experience was hired over Carroll,who resigned three months later and was replaced by the former editorof the AIPAC newsletter Near East Report.14

One of the lobby's most energetic media watchdog groups—though notthe only one—is the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting inAmerica (CAMERA). It has been especially critical of National Public Radio,which it sometimes refers to as "National Palestine Radio."1 5 In additionto maintaining a website to publicize alleged examples of media bias, CAMERAorganized demonstrations outside National Public Radio stations inthirty-three cities in May 2003, and it tried to convince contributors to withhold

support from NPR until its Middle East coverage became more sympatheticto Israel. One of Boston's public radio stations, WBUR, reportedly lostmore than $1 million in contributions as a result of these efforts. In 2006,CAMERA ran expensive full-page advertisements in the New York Timesand New York Sun criticizing Jimmy Carter's book Palestine: Peace NotApartheid, ads that included the publisher's phone number and encouragedreaders to call and complain.1 6

Additional pressure on NPR comes from Israel's friends in Congress. InMarch 2003, for example, a group of congressmen—whose ranks includedstaunch defenders of Israel such as California Democrats Tom Lantos, BradSherman, and Henry Waxman—wrote a letter to NPR President KevinKlose, asking for an internal audit of its Middle East coverage. Klose refused,but he also began reaching out to various Jewish groups in an effortto deflect the pressure.1 7

The lobby's efforts to gain favorable coverage take other forms as well. InAugust 2003, for example, the writer Ian Buruma wrote an article in the

New York Times Magazine titled "How to Talk About Israel." He made theobvious point that it is sometimes difficult to talk "critically anddispassionately"about Israel in the United States and pointed out that "even legitimatecriticism of Israel, or of Zionism, is often quickly denounced as anti-Semitism by various watchdogs." In response, Bret Stephens, then the editorof the Jerusalem Post and now a columnist and editorial board member at theWall Street Journal, published a vitriolic open letter in the Post that began byasking Buruma, "Are you a Jew?" Two paragraphs later, Stephens declared,"What matters to me is that you say, 'I am a Jew.'" Why did this matter? Becausein Stephens's view, "One must be at least a Jew to tell the goyim howthey may or may not talk about Israel." The message of this remarkable letterwas, in short, that non-Jews should talk about this subject only in waysthat Jews deem acceptable.1 8 Sensitivity on this point may also explain whyan editor at the New York Times asked the historian Tony Judt to identifyhimself as Jewish in an op-ed he had written defending our original LondonReview of Books article.1 9

Stephens's views are undoubtedly anathema to many people—includingmost American Jews—but the fact remains that some leading figures in thelobby are uncomfortable with a free and open discussion of issues related toIsrael. ADL head Abraham Foxman told New York Times Magazine writerJames Traub that it is "naïve" to think that the

"free market of ideas ultimatelysifts falsehood to produce truth." As Traub recounts, "Experience . . .has taught [Foxman] that the truth does not win on its own merits; the marketfor falsehood is too powerful." Falsehood, in this view, is what would followfrom a serious interrogation of the United States-Israel relationship andIsrael's strategic and moral standing. Groups like the ADL want to makesure that critics of Israel and unconditional U.S. support for the Jewish stateremain on the margins of public discourse, and that their views about Israelbe regarded as illegitimate.2 0

The final way to encourage favorable coverage of Israel is to co-optprominent commentators so that they disseminate a pro-Israel perspective.Toward this end, the Conference of Presidents helped establish America'sVoices in Israel, a nonprofit group whose purpose, according to the Conference'swebsite, is "to strengthen American understanding of and support forIsrael by inviting U.S.-based radio talk show hosts to see Israel and broadcasttheir programs live from Jerusalem." The America's Voices website describesthe organization as being "on the forefront of Israel's hasbara (publicrelations) efforts," and Conference of Presidents head Malcolm Hoenlein(who is also president of the America's Voices board) calls it "one of the most

important, exciting, and effective hasbara initiatives." Participants have includedradio personalities such as Oliver North, Glenn Beck, Monica Crowley,Michael Medved, Armstrong Williams, and many others. The campaign

helps ensure that a growing array of talk show hosts will purvey a pro-Israelmessage to their listeners.2 1

These diverse efforts share a common purpose: to make it less likely thatmainstream media organizations will report information or events that portrayIsrael negatively, and to promote public commentary that reinforces thestrategic and moral rationales that are used to justify strong U.S. support.These efforts are not 100 percent successful, of course, but they are stillquite effective.

THINK TANKS THAT THINK ONE WAY

Pro-Israel forces wield significant influence in think tanks, which play anincreasinglyimportant role in shaping public debate as well as actual policy onkey issues. Instead of relying on government officials or academics to provideanalysis and commentary, news media increasingly depend on expertsfrom Washington-based think tanks, most of which have energetic publicrelations and media relations offices designed to promote their experts'views in the public arena. Many think tanks also distribute brief and easilydigested policy memorandums to legislators and other government officials;organize seminars, working breakfasts; and briefings for officials and theirstaffs; and encourage their own analysts to publish op-eds and other visibleforms of commentary, all with the goal of shaping the prevailing climate ofideas. Think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute or Brookings supplyadvisers to presidential campaigns and officials to new administrations,offer the same people a safe haven when they are out of power, and providethem with platforms from which they can continue to influence debate insideand outside the Beltway. They serve as incubators for new policy ideasand are a critical part of the web of power in Washington.2 2

Recognizing the need for a prominent but seemingly "objective" voice inthe policy arena surrounding Israel, former AIPAC president Larry Weinberg;his wife, Barbi Weinberg; AIPAC's vice president; and AIPAC deputydirector for research Martin Indyk founded the Washington Institute forNear East Policy in 1985.2 3 Although WINEP plays down its links to Israeland claims that it provides a "balanced and realistic" perspective on MiddleEast issues, this is not the case.2 4 In fact, WINEP is funded and run by in

dividuals who are deeply committed to advancing Israel's agenda. Its boardof advisers includes prominent pro-Israel figures such as Edward Luttwak,Martin Peretz, Richard Perle, James Woolsey, and Mortimer Zuckerman, butincludes no one who might be thought of as

favoring the perspective of anyother country or group in the "Near East." Many of its personnel are genuinescholars or experienced former officials, but they are hardly neutral observerson most Middle East issues and there is little diversity of viewswithin WINEP's ranks.

The lobby's influence in the think tank world extends well beyondWINEP. As discussed in Chapter 4, over the past twenty-five years, pro-Israel individuals have established a commanding presence at the AmericanEnterprise Institute, the Center for Security Policy, the Foreign Policy ResearchInstitute, the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute, the Institutefor Foreign Policy Analysis, and the Jewish Institute for NationalSecurity Affairs. These think tanks are all decidedly pro-Israel and includefew, if any, critics of U.S. support for the Jewish state.

Another indication of the lobby's influence in the think tank world is theevolution of the Brookings Institution. For many years, its senior expert onMiddle East issues was William B. Quandt, a distinguished academic andformer NSC official with a well-deserved reputation for evenhandedness regardingthe Arab-Israeli conflict. In the mid-1970s, in fact, Brookings releasedan influential report on the Middle East that emphasized the need forIsraeli withdrawals, Palestinian self-determination (including the possibilityof an independent state), open access to religious sites in Jerusalem, and securityguarantees for Israel. The Brookings study was produced by a diversegroup of experts and is widely seen as the blueprint behind the Carter

administration'ssuccessful efforts to negotiate an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.25

Today, however, Brookings's work on these issues is conducted throughits Saban Center for Middle East Policy, which was established in 2002 witha $ 13 million grant, primarily financed by Haim Saban, an ardent Zionist.The New York Times described him as "perhaps the most politically connectedmogul in Hollywood, throwing his weight and money around Washingtonand, increasingly, the world, trying to influence all things Israeli."This "tireless cheerleader for Israel" told the Times, "I'm a one-issue guy, andmy issue is Israel." His efforts led Ariel Sharon to describe him as "a greatAmerican citizen and a man who always stood by Israel and the Jewishpeople in times of need."2 6 The man chosen to run the Saban Center wasMartin Indyk, the former Clinton administration official who had previouslyserved as AIPAC's deputy director of research and helped found WINEP.

DOMINATING PUBLIC DISCOURSE

It is hard to imagine that a research institute funded by Saban and directedby Indyk is going to be anything but pro-Israel. To be sure, the SabanCenter occasionally hosts Arab scholars and exhibits some diversity of opinion.Saban Center fellows—like Indyk himself—often endorse the idea of atwo-state settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. But Saban Centerpublications never question U.S. support for Israel and rarely, if ever, offersignificant criticism of key Israeli policies. Moreover, individuals who strayfrom the Center's line do not remain for long, as former NSC official FlyntLeverett's brief tenure there illustrates.2 7

The Center's pro-Israel proclivities are on display at its annual Saban Forum,which brings together prominent U.S. and Israeli leaders for a two-dayconference, held in either Washington or Jerusalem. The 2006 Forum, titled"America and Israel: Confronting a Middle East in Turmoil," featured appearancesby Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Bill Clinton, SenatorHillary Clinton, Shimon Peres, William Kristol, Representatives Tom Lantosand Jane Harman, and Israel Minister of Strategic Affairs AvigdorLieberman, among others. Pro-Arab voices, or voices who might articulate adifferent view of U.S.-Israeli relations, were conspicuously absent.2 8

Given the important role that these institutions play in shaping ideas andpolicy, the balance of power inside the Beltway strongly favors Israel. Thereare a few smaller think tanks that are not reflexively pro-Israel—like theNew America Foundation, the Cato

Institute, and the Middle East Institute—but the largest and most visible foreign policy research institutions inWashington usually take Israel's side and do not question the merits ofunconditionalU.S. support.

Finally, a word is in order about the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations,which is based in New York City. Its impressive staff of experts has amore diverse range of views than the leading think tanks in Washington, formany years hosting both visible critics of Israeli policy such as Henry Siegman,former head of the American Jewish Congress, along with ardent pro-Israel figures like Max Boot. But the Council is not exempt from pressure, asthe reaction to its invitation to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejadin September 2006 illustrates. Prominent Jewish organizations angrilyprotested the invitation and an effort to organize a set of high-profileresignationswas headed off only when Council president Richard Haass agreed todowngrade the session from a dinner to a "working meeting." As the ADL'sAbe Foxman told the New York Times Magazine, "To break bread with theguy . . . was crossing the line." Given Ahmadinejad's offensive remarks aboutIsrael and the Holocaust, this reaction is understandable.2 9 Yet it illustrates

once again the lobby's efforts to ensure that the various institutions thatshape public discourse remain sensitive to its concerns.

POLICING ACADEMIA

The lobby's campaign to mold debate about Israel has faced the greatest difficultyin academia. Not only do many professors have tenure (which insulatesthem from many forms of pressure), but they also work in a realm whereintellectual freedom is a core value and where challenging the prevailing wisdomis common and often prized. There is also a deep-seated commitment tofreedom of speech on college and university campuses. The internationalizationof American universities over the past thirty years has brought largenumbers of foreign-born students and professors to the United States, andthese people are often more critical of Israel's conduct than Americanstend to be.

Even so, groups in the lobby did not devote significant efforts to shapingdiscussion on campus during the 1990s, mainly because the Oslo peaceprocess was under way. There was relatively little violence between Israeland the Palestinians during this period, and many believed the conflict wason the verge of being solved. As a result, there was only mild criticism of Israelin the 1990s and little need for the lobby to intervene.

Criticism at colleges and universities rose sharply after the Oslo processcollapsed and Ariel Sharon came to power in February 2001, and it becameespecially intense in the spring of 2002 when the IDF reoccupiedPalestiniancontrolledareas in the West Bank and employed massive force against theSecond Intifada. As one would expect, the lobby moved aggressively to "takeback the campuses." New groups sprang up, like the Caravan for Democracy,which brought "speakers from Israel to discuss the challenges Israelfaces as the only democracy in the Middle East."3 0 The Jewish Council forPublic Affairs (JCPA) initiated a series of advocacy training sessions for collegestudents who wanted to defend Israel on their campuses, and a new organization—the Israel on Campus Coalition—was formed to coordinate thetwenty-six different groups that now sought to make Israel's case on campus.

Not to be outdone, Christians United for Israel recently formed a partnershipwith the David Project, a Boston-based pro-Israel group focused on campusissues. Their goal is to establish college chapters and training programs(the first being at California State University, Bakersfield) designed to helpChristian students "make the case for Israel." CUFI executive director David

Brog said the purpose of the program was to "build the next generation," andDavid Project director Charles Jacobs said it "will

teach them how to respondso that they can say more than just God gave Israel the land. We will teachthem how to understand the conflict, not as a border war, but as a regionalconflict between Arabs and Jews, as the centerpiece of a global war."31

Predictably, the most important organization in the effort to win back thecampuses was AIPAC, which had been monitoring campus activity andtraining young advocates for Israel since at least the late 1970s. AIPAC morethan tripled its spending on college programs as Israel came under fire. Theaim of this effort, according to Jonathan Kessler, the director of leadershipdevelopment at AIPAC, was "to vastly expand the number of students involvedon campus, their competence, and their involvement in the nationalpro-Israel effort." In the summer of 2003, AIPAC brought 240 college studentson all-expenses-paid trips to Washington, D.C., for four days of intensiveadvocacy training. Students were instructed that when they returned toschool they should concentrate on networking with campus leaders of allkinds and winning them over to Israel's cause.3 2 In 2007, more than 1,200students from nearly 400 colleges and universities attended AIPAC's annualPolicy Conference, including 150 student body presidents.3 3

This campaign to cultivate students has been accompanied by efforts toinfluence university faculty and hiring practices. In the early 1980s, for example,AIPAC recruited students to help it identify professors and campusorganizations that might be considered anti-Israel. The findings were publishedin 1984 in The AIPAC College Guide: Exposing the Anti-Israel Campaignon Campus. At the same time, the ADL, which was compiling files onindividuals and organizations it considered suspect regarding Israel,surreptitiously

distributed a small booklet containing "background information onpro-Arab sympathizers active on college campuses" who "use their anti-Zionism as merely a guise for their deeply felt anti-Semitism."3 4

This effort intensified in September 2002, when Daniel Pipes establishedCampus Watch, a website that posted dossiers on suspect academicsand, stealing a page from AIPAC's playbook, encouraged students to reportcomments or behavior that might be considered hostile to Israel.3 5 Thistransparent attempt to blacklist and intimidate scholars prompted a harshreaction and Pipes later removed the dossiers, but the website still invitesstudents to report alleged anti-Israel behavior at U.S. colleges.3 6

Pipes's campaign to stamp out criticism of Israel on campuses did notstop there. Together with Martin Kramer, an Israeli-American scholar whohas appointments at both WINEP and Israel's Shalem Center, and Stanley

Kurtz, a contributing editor at the National Review and research fellow at theconservative Hoover Institution, Pipes began encouraging Congress to curtailor at least closely monitor the Title VI funding that the federal governmentgives to Middle East and other area studies programs at major universities.The aim is to silence or at least inhibit critics of Israel and as a result forceuniversitiesto hire scholars whose views are more in line with those of Pipes,Kramer, and Kurtz. The International Studies in Higher Education Act (HR3077), which they supported, would have set up a government-appointedboard to watch over international studies centers receiving federal monies.The board's mandate would include making recommendations to the Secretaryof Education and Congress that would help ensure that the activities ofcenters receiving funding "reflect diverse perspectives and the full range ofviews on world regions, foreign languages and international affairs."37 Thoughseemingly innocuous, this aspect of the proposed legislation was in fact a responseto Kramer and Kurtz's claims that existing Middle East studies programswere biased and fostering anti-American and anti-Israel attitudes.3 8

Had the legislation passed as written, universities that wanted governmentsupport would have faced a clear incentive to hire individuals for theirarea studies programs who supported existing U.S. policy and were not criticalof Israel. Key groups in the lobby backed the initiative, with AIPAC, theADL, the American Jewish Congress, and five other organizations dispatchinga letter to Congress that

accused existing Title VI centers of "uncriticallypromoting a positive image of Palestinians, Arabs, and the Islamic World,while ignoring or denigrating Israel."3 9 HR 3077 was approved by the Housebut was never formally considered by the full Senate.4 0 Similar legislationwas reintroduced in 2005 and passed the House by a narrow margin (221 to199) in March 2006, but the Senate again declined to act and the legislationexpired at the end of the 109th Congress.4 1

Kramer and Kurtz claimed victory in 2007, however, when a congressionallymandated National Research Council study of the Title VI programsrecommended the creation of an executive-level presidential appointee tooversee international studies and language programs.42 The NRC study defendedthe integrity of existing area studies programs and did not endorseKramer and Kurtz's accusations of bias. In fact, one member of the studygroup, former Census Bureau director Kenneth Prewitt, told reporters thatbias would have been visible if it were rampant, but in his words, "it's not outthere."4 3 Some supporters of existing Title VI centers suggested that assigningthese programs to a high-level presidential appointee would enhancetheir status and help them obtain greater resources. However, giving a sin

gle individual such extensive oversight also raises the worrisome possibilitythat a future presidential appointee might one day be in a position to implementthe Pipes/Kramer/Kurtz program of ideological conformity.

Moreover, the April 2007 version of the Title VI legislation on international

education programs, now under consideration in the Senate, would create acomplaint procedure for individuals who felt that an existing Title VI programdid not contain sufficiently diverse views. If complainants were notsatisfied by the university's response, their grievance could be "filed with theDepartment [of Education] and reviewed by the Secretary." The draft legislationalso directs the secretary to "take the review of such complaints intoaccount when determining the renewal of grants."44 If this clause becomeslaw, one can easily imagine groups in the lobby leveling repeated complaintsagainst any Middle East studies program that employs someone who hascriticized Israeli policies, in order to convince the Department of Educationto cut off Title VI support or to encourage the university in question to safeguardits funding by tilting in a pro-Israel direction.

To further counter a perceived anti-Israel bias in academia, a number ofphilanthropists have established Israel studies programs at U.S. universities(in addition to the roughly 130 Jewish studies programs that already exist), soas to increase the number of "Israel-friendly" scholars on campus.4 5 NYU announcedthe establishment of the Taub Center for Israel Studies on May 1,2003, and similar programs have been established at other schools, includingBerkeley, Brandeis, and Emory. Academic administrators emphasize thepedagogical value of these programs, but they are also intended to promoteIsrael's image on campus. Fred Lafer, the head of the Taub Foundation,makes clear that his foundation funded the NYU center to help counter the"Arabic [sic] point of view" that he thinks is prevalent in NYU's Middle Eastprograms.4 6

Similar motives reportedly lay behind gambling mogul Sheldon Adelson'sproposed multimillion-dollar gift to expand the existing Program for JewishCivilization at Georgetown University so as to create a center focusing onthe "Jewish theme as a paradigm of international relations." Haaretz reportedin August 2006 that "one of the key goals of Adelson and other advocatesof the Jewish center is to moderate the Arab presence at theuniversity." The program's first director, Yossi Shain (who also heads the HartogSchool of Government at Tel Aviv University), said it was important toset up such a program at Georgetown "because it's a Jesuit school, becauseit's in Washington, because it's in the foreign service school." Similarly,universityrabbi Harold White said that establishing the new center would bal

ance Georgetown's existing Arab center, and this was particularly importantbecause "many Georgetown graduates end up at the State Department."4 7

The lobby's desire to police academia has led to several noteworthy effortsto pressure administrators or influence personnel decisions. In the summerof 2002, for example, pro-Israel groups at the University of Chicago claimedthat there was "an atmosphere of intimidation and hate for Jewish studentson campus" and charged that the faculty and administration were doing nothingabout the problem. Indeed, it was said that faculty and administrators"sanction and even encourage such outbursts." Stung by the allegations, theadministration collected all the students' claims and investigated them. Onlytwo charges were found to be valid: an instance of anti-Semitic graffiti in adormitory, which the resident staff failed to deal with promptly, and an e-mailsent out by a graduate student on a department mailing list that told a jokeabout Auschwitz. Although regrettable, this hardly constituted evidence of an"atmosphere of persecution and estrangement," which is how one Jewish studentdescribed Chicago in 2002. Nevertheless, the Israeli consul general inChicago and then the Israeli ambassador to the United States visited the universityshortly thereafter. Their aim was to force the president and the provostto find ways to improve Israel's profile on campus. During this same period,the prominent Palestinian-American historian Rashid Khalidi, who was thenon Chicago's faculty, had his e-mail system bombarded with spam.4 8

When Columbia recruited Khalidi away from the University of Chicago,reports Jonathan Cole, the former provost at Columbia, "The complaintsstarted flowing in from people who disagreed with the content of his politicalviews." Princeton faced much the same problem a few years later when ittried to woo Khalidi away from Columbia.4 9 The late Palestinian-American

scholar Edward Said, who taught at Columbia for many years, was the targetof similar denunciations, and Cole later said that "any public statementin support of the Palestinian people by the preeminent literary critic EdwardSaid will elicit hundreds of e-mails, letters, and journalistic accounts thatcall on us to denounce Said and to either sanction or fire him."5 0 Columbia'stravails did not end there: in 2004, the David Project produced a propagandafilm alleging that faculty in Columbia University's Middle East Studiesprogram were anti-Semitic and were intimidating Jewish students whodefended Israel.5 1 Columbia was raked over the coals in neoconservativepublications like the New York Sun, but a faculty committee assigned to investigatethe charges found no evidence of anti-Semitism and the only incidentworth noting was the possibility that one professor had "responded

heatedly" to a students question. The committee also found that the accusedprofessors had been the target of an overt intimidation campaign.5 2

One would like to think that these were just isolated incidents, but muchthe same thing happened again in 2006, when the Departments of Historyand Sociology at Yale University voted an appointment for Professor JuanCole, a distinguished historian at the University of Michigan. Cole is alsothe author of a prizewinning weblog ("Informed Comment"), and he hasbeen critical of a number of Israeli policies in recent years. Pro-Israelcolumnists in the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Times attackedCole's appointment, and the newspaper Jewish Week reported that severalprominent Jewish donors had called Yale officials to protest the decision,which was subsequently overturned by Yale's appointments committee. Theactual impact of donor pressure is unknown, but the incident underscoresthe importance that some of Israel's supporters have placed on shaping discourseon campus.5 3

Efforts to protect Israel from criticism have also targeted individualspeakers, visiting professors, and guest lecturers, in order to create an atmospherewhere free expression and open debate are curtailed. In 1984, a studentgroup at Stanford University invited alumnus and former CongressmanPete McCloskey to teach as a visiting lecturer. McCloskey was a prominentcritic of unconditional U.S. support for Israel, having proposed an amendmentin 1980 that would have reduced American aid by the amount that Israelwas

spending annually on its West Bank settlements. His actions led tocharges that he was an anti-Semite and helped ensure his defeat in his 1982Senate campaign. But the controversy did not stop there: the director ofStanford's Hillel chapter said his appointment was "a slap in the face of theJewish community," and members of the student governing council threatenedto reduce his compensation or terminate his appointment if he did notremove an article by former Assistant Secretary of State George Ball fromhis course syllabus and add materials reflecting pro-AIPAC views. In sharpcontrast with normal academic practice, they also insisted that he scheduleadditional class sessions with guests representing alternative perspectives. Afaculty review found the student group guilty of "serious abridgments" ofacademic freedom and McCloskey eventually received a formal apologyfrom the Stanford provost.5 4

We have some experience with this tactic ourselves. In early 2006, wewere each independently invited to appear on a panel at the U.S. Naval WarCollege's annual Current Strategy Forum. The topic of the panel was "The

Nature of Power," which, it is worth noting, had little to do with Middle Eastpolitics or U.S. foreign policy in that region. Following the publication of ouroriginal article, "The Israel Lobby," in March 2006, the president of the WarCollege received phone calls from several members of Congress who questionedwhether it was appropriate to have us speak at the conference.5 5 To hiscredit, the president took no action in response to these calls and we appearedwithout incident. A subsequent invitation to Walt to speak in a lectureseries at the University of Montana also provoked heated denunciations byseveral faculty members, who began a protracted but unsuccessful campaignto have the faculty coordinator of the lecture series removed from his post.5 6

In addition to targeting faculty and hiring on campus, a number of pro-Israel academics and groups have tried to suppress publication of scholarlyworks that challenged their particular views. In 1998, for example, the ADLcalled on the publisher of Norman Finkelstein and Ruth Bettina Birn's ANation on Trial (Metropolitan Books) to halt its release. A Nation on Trial isa sharply worded critique of Daniel Goldhagen s controversial best sellerHitler's Willing Executioners, which argues that the Holocaust was not simplythe product of Nazi beliefs and Hitler s own madness but also was rootedin a pervasive "eliminationist ideology" in German society that predated theNazi period. Like the Goldhagen book, A Nation on Trial elicited both praiseand criticism from respected scholars. Yet ADL head Abraham Foxman saidA Nation on Trial should not have been published, insisting that the issuewas not "whether Goldhagen's thesis is right or wrong but what is 'legitimatecriticism' and what goes beyond the pale."5 7

A similar episode took place in 2003, when lawyers representing theHarvard law professor Alan Dershowitz sent threatening letters to the Universityof California Press in an attempt to halt publication of Finkelstein'sbook Beyond Chutzpah, an extended critique of Dershowitz's own The Case

for Israel. Dershowitz also wrote to California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger(who has nominal authority of public institutions like the university) aspart of his campaign against Finkelstein. Dershowitz subsequently claimedthat he was not trying to suppress publication, but that is certainly how officialsat UC Press interpreted his actions. They resisted these pressures andissued Finkelstein's book anyway.58

The campaign to keep Americans from reading or hearing critical viewsabout Israel even occurs at the high school level. In February 2005, for example,the New York Sun reported that Columbia's Khalidi was involved in alecture program for high school teachers sponsored by New York City's Departmentof Education. The Sun and some local politicians immediately

went to work to get him fired. The Sun accused him of calling Israel a "raciststate" (a charge Khalidi vehemently denied), and his participation was labeled"outrageous" by Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-NY), at that time acandidate for mayor, and "an abomination" by Brooklyn City Council memberSimcha Felder. Joel Klein, the chancellor of the Department of Education,dropped him

from the program the next day and issued a publicstatement saying, "Rashid Khalidi should not have been included in a programthat provided professional development for [Department of Education]teachers and he won't be participating in the future."59 The followingyear, New York's City Council approved a study program on Israel "initiatedby the public relations department of the Israeli Consulate in New York."60Meanwhile, a coalition of thirty-plus Jewish groups had already organized anew nationwide program to train high school students to be more effectiveadvocates for Israel.6 1

Pro-Israel groups and individuals have fought a multifront battle —against students, professors, administrators, and the curriculum itself—toshape discourse on campus. Their efforts have not been as successful in academiaas they have been on Capitol Hill or even in the media, but theirwork has not been in vain. Despite the continued turmoil in the region andIsrael's continued expansion in the Occupied Territories, there is less criticismof Israel on college campuses today than there was five years ago.6 2

OBJECTIONABLE TACTICS

As we have repeatedly emphasized, lobbying on Israel's behalf is wholly legitimate,as are overt efforts to shape public perceptions by participating in publicdiscourse about matters relating to Israel. We do not think the lobby'scurrent influence serves the interest of either the United States or Israel, butmost of its tactics are reasonable and simply part of the normal rough-andtumblethat is the essence of democratic politics. Unfortunately, some pro-Israel individuals and groups have occasionally taken their defense of Israelto illegitimate extremes, attempting to silence individuals who hold viewsthey dislike. This endeavor can involve intimidating and smearing critics of

Israel, or even attempting to damage or wreck their careers. The previous discussionof the lobby's actions in academia provides a number of examples ofthis kind of behavior, which has no place in a democratic society. The lobby,however, does not confine its strong-arm tactics to the academic world.

Consider what happened in October 2006 to Tony Judt, a New York Uni

versity historian who is Jewish but frequently critical of Israel's actions. Hewas scheduled to give a lecture at the Polish consulate in New York City "TheIsrael Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy." The Polish government was not sponsoringthe event; the consulate had merely rented its facilities to Network20/20, an independent group that sponsors lectures on a wide range of topics.David Harris, the executive director of the American Jewish Committee, gotwind of the event and contacted the Polish consul general. Harris later explainedthat he had called as a "friend of Poland" and said that the lecture "wasgoing to be entirely contrary to the entire spirit of Polish foreign policy." Theconsul general also received two inquiries from the ADL, and he later describedthe calls as "exercising a delicate pressure . . . We are adults and ourIQs are high enough to understand that." The consulate canceled Judt's lectureat the last minute, which led a group of prominent American intellectualsto issue an open letter denouncing this obvious effort to stifle freediscussion.6 3 Judt has also reported receiving death threats against him and hisfamily on other occasions, inspired by his previous criticisms of Israeli policy.64

A similar incident occurred later that same month, when the French embassyin the United States scheduled a reception to celebrate the publicationof Carmen Callil's Bad Faith, a widely hailed examination of the role that ascurrilous French official (Louis Darquier) had played in the deportation ofFrench Jews to Auschwitz. Although the book is a passionate and moving indictmentof French complicity in the Holocaust, the embassy reportedly receivedcomplaints about a brief passage in Callil's postscript: "What causedme anguish, as I tracked down Louis Darquier, was to live so closely to thehelpless terror of the Jews of France, and to see what the Jews of Israel werepassing on to the Palestinian people." Bowing to the pressure, the Frenchembassy said that "it could not endorse a personal opinion of the author expressedin the postscript of the book" and canceled the reception.6 5

An even more prominent case involved My Name Is Rachel

Corrie, a playabout the young woman who was killed in March 2003 by an Israeli bulldozerwhen she was attempting to prevent the IDF from demolishing aPalestinian home in the Gaza Strip. The play, which was based on Corrie'sdiaries and e-mails, opened in April 2005 at the Royal Court Theatre in Londonand was widely acclaimed. It was scheduled to open in March 2006 atthe New York Theater Workshop, which has a well-established reputationfor staging controversial productions, only to be postponed about a monthbefore its scheduled opening. The New York Times reported that the workshop'sartistic director had decided to postpone the play "after polling localJewish religious and community leaders as to their feelings about the work,"

and the Los Angeles Times quoted him saying that "what we heard was thatafter Ariel Sharon's illness and the election of Hamas in the recent Palestinianelections, we had a very edgy situation."6 6 (The original Royal Court productionof the play was eventually brought to New York in the fall of 2006for a limited run of eighty performances.) A similar occurrence took place inCanada in December 2006 when that country's largest not-for-profit theatercanceled a scheduled production of the play, due to fears that it would angerToronto's Jewish community.6 7 And the same thing happened again in April2007, when Miami's Mosaic Theatre canceled plans to mount the play afterprotests from what the Miami Herald called an "impassioned, vocal minority"of subscribers and outside individuals.68

The overzealous pursuit of supposedly "dangerous critics" has evenlanded one prominent group in the lobby in a courtroom. In the 1980s andearly 1990s, the ADL enlisted the services of a private investigator named

Roy Bullock who also did intelligence gathering for the apartheid governmentin South Africa. Bullock, in turn, obtained information from a Los Angelespolice intelligence officer who allegedly removed confidential documentsfrom the police department and the Department of Motor Vehicles. In all,the two reportedly maintained files on some twelve thousand individuals andsix hundred organizations in California, some of which were provided to theADL. In addition to white supremacists and neo-Nazi groups, the targets ofthis surveillance included a number of Jewish dissidents, Arab-Americangroups, and other critics of Israeli government policies. The San Franciscodistrict attorney launched a criminal investigation, and the police officerultimatelypleaded no contest to the unauthorized use of a police computer. Butthe district attorney was reluctant to prosecute the ADL because he thoughtit was a force for good. Instead, the district attorney accepted an offer by theADL to pay $75,000 to fight bigotry in the local area, and no criminal chargeswere filed against the organization or Bullock.

There was, however, a civil suit brought by three of the targets, two ofthem Jewish. The ADL eventually agreed to settle out of court and to payeach $50,000 plus court costs. ADL head Abraham Foxman denied that theADL spied on anyone, but defended its practice of investigating groups criticalof Israel by saying "a viable, safe, secure haven" in Israel is "part and parcelof the safety and security and survival of the Jewish people." The ADLwas not protecting the community from anti-Semitism or bigotry, which isits stated mission; it was simply targeting individuals thought to be criticalof Israel or of U.S. support.69

THE "NEW ANTI-SEMITISM"

No discussion of how the lobby operates would be complete without examiningone of its most powerful weapons: the charge of anti-Semitism. Anyonewho criticizes Israeli actions or says that pro-Israel groups have significantinfluence over U.S. Middle East policy stands a good chance of getting labeledan anti-Semite. In fact, anyone who says that there is an Israel lobbyruns the risk of being charged with anti-Semitism, even though AIPAC andthe Conference of Presidents are hardly bashful about describing their influenceand the Israeli media themselves refer to America s "Jewish lobby."70In effect, the lobby both boasts of its own power and frequently attacksthose who call attention to it.

This accusation is now being made in the context of alarmist

claims abouta resurgence of virulent anti-Semitism, especially in Europe. In October2002, Conference of Presidents chairman Mortimer B. Zuckerman wrote in

U.S. News & World Report of a "shameful contagion of anti-Semitism," warningthat "Europe is sick again," and the Boston Globe columnist Jeff Jacobydevoted a March 2004 column to the resurgent "cancer of anti-Semitism inEurope."71 We are "getting to a point," the U.S. ambassador to the EuropeanUnion said in early 2004, "where it is as bad as it was in the 1930s."7 2Measuring anti-Semitism is a complicated matter, but the weight of evidencepoints in the opposite direction. Indeed, in the spring of 2004, whenaccusations of European anti-Semitism were prevalent in America, separatesurveys of European public opinion conducted by the ADL and the Pew ResearchCenter for the People and the Press showed that it was actuallydeclining.7 3

Consider France, which pro-Israel groups often portray as the most anti-Semitic state in Europe, and whose capital, according to the New RepublicsMartin Peretz, is "the headquarters of anti-Semitic Europe today, just asduring the Third Republic."7 4 Yet a poll of French citizens in 2002 foundthat 89 percent could envisage living with a Jew; 97 percent believed makinganti-Semitic graffiti is a serious crime; 87 percent thought attacks on Frenchsynagogues are scandalous; and 85 percent of practicing French Catholicsrejected the charge that Jews have too much influence in business and finance.7 5 The head of the French Jewish community declared in the summerof 2003 that "France is not more anti-Semitic than America."7 6 According toHaaretz, the French police reported that anti-Semitic incidents in Francehad declined by almost 50 percent in 2005, and this despite the fact that

France has the largest Muslim population of any country in Europe.7 7

When a French Jew was brutally murdered by a Muslim gang in February2006, tens of thousands of French demonstrators poured into the streetsto condemn anti-Semitism. President Jacques Chirac and Prime MinisterDominique de Villepin both attended the victim's memorial service in a publicshow of solidarity with French Jewry.7 8 It is also worth noting that in2002, more Jews from the former Soviet empire immigrated to Germanythan to Israel, making it "the fastest growing Jewish community in theworld," according to an article in the Jewish newspaper Forward.79 If Europewere really "as bad as it was in the 1930s," it is hard to imagine that Jewswould be moving there in large numbers.

We recognize that Europe is not free of the scourge of anti-Semitism. Noone would deny that there are still some virulent autochthonous anti-Semitesin Europe (as there are in the United States), but their numbers are smalland their extreme views are rejected by the vast majority of Europeans. Norwould we deny that there is anti-Semitism among European Muslims, someof it provoked by Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians and some of itstraightforwardly racist.8 0 In Great Britain, for example, the Community SecurityTrust (CST), a watchdog group that monitors anti-Semitism, reporteda 31 percent rise in such incidents in 2006. Although such deplorable eventsshould never be taken lightly, the total number of incidents reported was 594(in a country of more than sixty million people), and nearly a quarter of themcoincided with the 2006 war in Lebanon. As CST's Mark Gardner acknowledged,"This is certainly not comparable with the 1930s or anything remotelylike that."81 Several other groups—including the Israel-based Global ForumAgainst Anti-Semitism—reported that anti-Semitic incidents had actuallydeclined during this same period. Given potential coding and underreportingissues, these conflicting results suggest that claims of a substantial rise or fallin actual anti-Semitism should be made and interpreted with some caution.8 2

When pressed to go beyond vague assertions, pro-Israel groups nowclaim that there is a "new anti-Semitism," which they equate with criticismof Israel.8 3 When the synod of the Church of England voted in early 2006 todivest from Caterpillar Inc. on the grounds that Caterpillar manufacturesthe bulldozers used to demolish Palestinian

homes, the chief rabbi of the

U.K. complained that it would "have the most adverse repercussions on . . .Jewish-Christian relations in Britain," while Rabbi Tony Bayfield, the headof the Reform movement, said, "There is a clear problem of anti-Zionist—verging on anti-Semitic—attitudes emerging in the grass roots, and even inthe middle ranks of the Church."8 4 The church was guilty of neither anti-Zionism nor anti-Semitism; it was merely protesting Israeli policy.8 5

Supporters of Israel, in fact, have a history of using fears of a "new anti-Semitism" to shield Israel from criticism. In 1974, when Israel was under increasingpressure to withdraw from the lands it had conquered in 1967,Arnold Forster and Benjamin Epstein of the ADL published The New Anti-Semitism, which argued that anti-Semitism was on the rise and exemplifiedby the growing unwillingness of other societies to support Israel's actions.8 6In the early 1980s, when the invasion of Lebanon and Israel's expanding settlementstriggered additional criticisms, and when U.S. arms sales to itsArab allies were hotly contested, then ADL head Nathan Perlmutter and hiswife, Ruth Ann Perlmutter, released The Real Anti-Semitism in America,which argued that anti-Semitism was on its way back, as shown by the pressureon Israel to make peace with the Arabs and by events like the sale ofAWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia.8 7 The Perlmutters also suggested thatmany "a-Semitic" actions, which they define as acts not motivated by hostilityto Jews, may nonetheless harm Jewish interests (and especially Israel'swell-being), and could easily bring back genuine anti-Semitism.8 8

The troubling logic of this argument is revealed by the fact that there waslittle mention of anti-Semitism during the 1990s, when Israel was involvedin the Oslo peace process. Indeed, one Israeli scholar wrote in 1995 that"never before, at least since the time Christianity seized power over the Roman

Empire, has anti-Semitism been less significant than at present."8 9Charges of anti-Semitism became widespread only in the spring of 2002,when Israel came under severe criticism around the world for its brutal behaviorin the Occupied Territories.

Critics are also accused of holding Israel to an unfair standard or questioningits right to exist. Thus, Natan Sharansky, the former Soviet dissidentwho is now a prominent Israeli author and politician, declares, "The newanti-Semitism appears in the guise of political criticism of Israel,' consistingof a discriminating approach and double standard towards the state of theJews, while questioning its right to exist."90 The implication is that anyonewho criticizes Israel's actions (or the actions of its supporters) is opposed toits existence and is therefore hostile to Jews. But this is a bogus charge, becauseit conflates criticism of Israel's actions with the rejection of Israel'slegitimacy.In fact, Western critics of Israel hardly ever question its right toexist. Instead, they question its behavior toward the Palestinians, which is alegitimate criticism; many Israelis question it themselves.

Israel is not being judged by a double standard when Western critics offersuch charges. Although a few critics may single Israel out for undue criticism,Israel is for the most part being judged by the same standard that

people in the West apply to all democracies. This criterion is entirely appropriate,especially since Israel and its American supporters constantly emphasizethat it deserves special treatment because it is the "only democracyin the Middle East." Israel, in other words, is expected to behave like contemporaryBritain, Canada, Denmark, the United States, and so forth, andnot like the military junta in Burma, Pervez Musharraf's Pakistan, or FidelCastro's Cuba. Israel's treatment of the Palestinians elicits criticism becauseit is contrary to widely accepted human rights norms and international law,as well as the principle of national self-determination. And it is hardly theonly state that has faced sharp criticism on these grounds. The UnitedStates was widely condemned for the abuses that occurred at Abu Ghraibprison and also for the way it has treated detainees at Guantânamo. ButAmerica is not being held to a double standard either; it is merely being expectedto live up to its own stated values and to widely accepted humanrights principles. And so is Israel.

These fine points notwithstanding, the charge of anti-Semitism remains awidely used weapon for dealing with critics of Israel, especially in theUnited States. This tactic has been effective for a number of reasons. First,anti-Semitism is a set of beliefs that led to great evils in the past, includingthe monstrous crimes of the Holocaust, and it is now utterly discredited inmost segments of society. The charge of anti-Semitism is one of the mostpowerful epithets one can level at someone in America, and no respectableperson wants to be tarred with that brush. Undoubtedly, the fear of beingcalled an anti-Semite discourages many individuals from voicing reservationsabout Israel's conduct or the merits of U.S. support.

Second, smearing critics of Israel or the lobby with the charge of anti-Semitism works to marginalize them in the public arena. If the accusationsticks, the critic's arguments will not be taken seriously by the media, governmentofficials, and other influential elites, and groups that might otherwisepay attention to that person's views will be discouraged from solicitingthem. Politicians will be especially reluctant to associate themselves withanyone who has been charged as anti-Semitic, because doing so could havea chilling effect on their own careers.

Third, this tactic works because it is difficult for anyone to prove beyondall doubt that he or she is not anti-Semitic, especially when criticizing Israel

or the lobby. Proving a negative is hard to do under any circumstances, especially

when it comes to something like intentions and motivations thatcannot be observed directly, and pointing to other behavior that is inconsistentwith anti-Semitism is not likely to carry much weight. Until recently,therefore, the charge of anti-Semitism has been a potent way to make surethat criticisms of Israel or the lobby were rarely spoken and were either ignoredor disparaged when they were.

The accusation is likely to resonate among American Jews, many of whomstill believe that anti-Semitism is rife. Not only does the history of Jews in thediaspora provide plenty of cause to worry, that tendency is magnified by therole that the Holocaust plays in the attitudes of a significant number of JewishAmericans. As Peter Novick makes clear in his seminal book, The Holocaustin American Life, that cataclysmic event has become a key element ofAmerican Jewish consciousness. It defines how many American Jews thinkabout the world around them, and not surprisingly, it has fostered a powerfulsense of victimization for some of them. Despite the great success Jews haveachieved in America, many Jewish Americans still worry that virulent anti-Semitism could return at any time. As Jack Wertheimer notes, "By virtuallyany measure, domestic anti-Semitism has declined sharply; however, manyAmerican Jews continue to believe that other Jews in the United States aretargets of bigotry." Frank Rich, the New York Times columnist, acknowledgesthis thinking when he writes, "Like many other Jews, I am perhaps all toowilling to believe that the entire world is anti-Semitic."9 1

This profound sense of fear among American Jews was clearly evidentwhen Israel was harshly criticized around the world in the spring of 2002.Nat Hentoff, who writes for the Village Voice, remarked at the time that "ifa loudspeaker goes off and a voice says, all Jews gather in Times Square,' itcould never surprise me," and Ron Rosenbaum wrote in the New York Observer,"There is likely to be a second Holocaust." These concerns grew soloud that Leon Wieseltier of the New Republic, himself a deeply committeddefender of Israel, felt compelled to write a cover story titled "Hitler IsDead: The Case Against Jewish Ethnic Panic." Describing Jews in theUnited States, he wrote, "The community is sunk in excitability, in the imaginationof disaster. There is a loss of intellectual control. Death is at everyJewish door. Fear is wild. Reason is derailed. Anxiety is the supreme proof ofauthenticity. Imprecise and inflammatory analogies abound. Holocaust imageryis everywhere."92 In short, many American Jews find it easy to believethat a person (and especially a gentile) who criticizes either Israel's actionsor the influence of groups like AIPAC is probably an anti-Semite at heart.

For all these reasons, when faced with criticism of Israels policies, some ofits defenders are quick to invoke the charge of anti-Semitism. The first andmost visible case is the heated reaction to Jimmy Carter's recent book, Palestine:Peace Not Apartheid. Despite its provocative title, the book is neitherpolemical nor unsympathetic to Israel's strategic situation. Carter is certainlycritical of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and what that means for thePalestinians living there, and he correctly observes that it is difficult to have acandid discussion of these issues in the United States. But as Yossi Beilin, aprominent Israeli politician, noted, "There is nothing in the criticism thatCarter has for Israel that has not been said by Israelis themselves."9 3 EvenCarter's use of the term "apartheid"—which seems to have provoked much ofthe ire directed at him—echoes the use of the term by Israeli critics of theoccupationand by prominent South Africans such as Nobel Peace Prize winnerBishop Desmond Tutu and current Minister of Intelligence Ronnie Kasrils.9 4

As noted, the ADL and CAMERA attacked Carter's book in prominentads in major newspapers, and though a number of critics addressed the substanceof Carter's claims, others immediately launched personal attacks onthe former president.9 5 Abraham Foxman said, "I believe he is engaging inanti-Semitism," while Martin Peretz wrote that Carter "will go down in historyas a Jew-hater."9 6 Deborah Lipstadt, the historian who won a landmarksuit against notorious Holocaust denier David Irving, wrote in the WashingtonPost that "Carter has repeatedly fallen back—possibly unconsciously—on traditional anti-Semitic canards" and suggested that there was a strongsimilarity between some of Carter's views and those of former Ku Klux Klanleader David Duke.9 7 As Carter himself said, "I have been called an anti-

Semite. I have been called a bigot. I have been called a plagiarist. I havebeen called a coward."9 8 It was a remarkable reaction to the man who in hisstewardship of the Egyptian-Israeli peace process had done as much as anyhuman being to enhance Israel's overall security.

A similar reaction—albeit on a smaller scale—occurred when formerneoconservative Francis Fukuyama published an article critiquing CharlesKrauthammer's 2004 Irving Kristol Lecture at the American Enterprise Institute.Fukuyama's analysis was pointed but respectful (among other things, hecalled Krauthammer a "gifted thinker" whose ideas were "worth taking seriously"),but his suggestion that Krauthammer's views on how to deal withthe Islamic world derived too much from Israel's experience led Krauthammerto charge Fukuyama with anti-Semitism.9 9

We are not unacquainted with this line of attack. When our original article,"The Israel Lobby," was published in the London Review of Books in

March 2006, we were widely and falsely accused of being anti-Semites. EliotCohen published an op-ed about our piece in the Washington Post titled "Yes,It's Anti-Semitic," and the New York Sun immediately linked us with DavidDuke.10 0 The ADL termed our article "a classical conspiratorial anti-Semiticanalysis invoking the canards of Jewish power and Jewish control"—ignoringour explicit statement that the lobby was just another interest group engagedin legitimate political activities—while the New Republic published four separateattacks on our paper, all describing it as anti-Semitic.10 1 In separate opedsin the Wall Street Journal, William Kristol accused us of "anti-Judaism,"and Ruth Wisse, a Harvard professor of Yiddish literature, likened our pieceto the writings of a notorious nineteenth-century German anti-Semite. Andin his own critique of Carter's book, Shmuel Rosner of Haaretz generouslyopined that the ex-president and Nobel Peace Prize winner was "not as anti-Semitic as Walt-Mearsheimer."102

The tendency to accuse critics of Israel of being anti-Semitic reachednew heights (or perhaps a new low) in early 2007, when the American JewishCommittee released a paper by the Indiana University English professorAlvin H. Rosenfeld titled "'Progressive'Jewish Thought and the New Anti-Semitism." Rosenfeld identified a group of liberal American Jews (includingthe playwright Tony Kushner, the historian Tony Judt, the poet Adrienne Rich,and the Washington Post columnist Richard Cohen) who have been

criticalof Israel and charged them with participating "alongside" a new anti-Semitismthat denies Israel's right to exist. In his introduction to the paper, thecommittee'sexecutive director, David Harris, wrote, "The most surprising—anddistressing—feature of this new trend is the very public participation of someJews in the verbal onslaught against Zionism and the Jewish state."10 3

The targets of Rosenfeld's critique vehemently denied his variouscharges, and Rabbi Michael Lerner of Tikkun pointed out the consequencesof such unwarranted accusations. "When we talk to Congressional representativeswho are liberal or even extremely progressive on every other issue,"he wrote, "they tell us privately that they are afraid to speak out aboutthe way Israeli policies are destructive to the best interests of the UnitedStates or the best interests of world peace—lest they too be labeled anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. If it can happen to Jimmy Carter, some of them toldme recently, a man with impeccable moral credentials, then no one is reallypolitically safe."10 4

In all of these cases, there was no evidence of actual anti-Semitism. Trueanti-Semitism conceives of Jews as being different from other people, in variousinvidious ways, which gives those others license to single them out and

persecute them in both large and small ways. Anti-Semites maintain that Jewswho are engaged in what seem like legitimate political activities—running foroffice, contributing to political campaigns, writing articles and books, ororganizing

lobbying groups—are actually engaged in dark and secret conspiracies.Real anti-Semites sometimes favor harsh measures to deny Jews fullpolitical rights and at times advocate even more violent persecution of Jews.Even in its milder forms, anti-Semitism indulges in various forms of stereotypingand implies that Jews should be viewed with suspicion or contempt, whileseeking to deny them the ability to participate fully and freely in all realms ofsociety. In its essential features, true anti-Semitism resembles other forms ofracist or religious discrimination, all of which have been roundly condemnedin Europe and the United States since the end of World War II.

By contrast, almost all of the many gentiles and Jews who now criticizeIsraeli policy or worry about the lobby's impact on U.S. foreign policy findsuch views deeply disturbing and categorically reject them. Rather, they believethat Jews are like other human beings, which means that they are capableof both good and bad deeds, and that they are entitled to the samestatus as other members of society. They also believe that Israel acts likeother states, which is to say that it vigorously defends its own interests andsometimes pursues policies that are wise and just and sometimes doesthings that are strategically foolish and even immoral. This perspective is theopposite of anti-Semitism. It calls for treating Jews like everyone else andtreating Israel as a normal and legitimate country. Israel, in this view, shouldbe praised when it acts well and criticized when it does not. Americans arealso entitled to be upset and critical when Israel does things that harm U.S.interests, and Americans who care about Israel should be free to criticize itwhen its government takes actions that they believe are not in Israel's interesteither. There is neither special treatment nor a double standard here.Similarly, most critics of the lobby do not see it as a cabal or conspiracy;rather, they argue—as we have—that pro-Israel organizations act as otherinterest groups do. While the charge of anti-Semitism can be an effectivesmear tactic, it is usually groundless.

Indeed, there are signs that the reflexive charge of anti-Semitism is beginningto lose its power to stifle debate. The attacks on Jimmy Carter's bookdid not deter the former president from publicizing it widely (including avisible and successful appearance at Brandeis University), and a number ofother public figures and mainstream publications have recently offered intelligentcriticisms of Israeli policy and the lobby's influence.10 5 Even WilliamKristol seems to have recognized that calling critics of Israel or the lobby

anti-Semites is losing its capacity to silence others, writing in the

Wall StreetJournal that "the mainstream Jewish organizations have played the anti-Semitism' card so often that it has been devalued."106 The obvious reason isthat increasing numbers of people recognize that this serious charge keepsgetting leveled at individuals who are not anti-Semites but who are merelyquestioning Israeli policies or pointing out that the lobby promotes policiesthat are not always in the U.S. national interest.

Let us be clear: anti-Semitism is a despicable phenomenon with a longand tragic history, and all people should remain vigilant against its resurgenceand condemn it when it arises. Furthermore, we should all be disturbedby the presence of genuine anti-Semitism in parts of the Arab andIslamic world (and in other societies—e.g., Russia), as well as its lingeringpresence in some segments of American and European society. But it is essentialthat we distinguish between true anti-Semitism and legitimate criticismof Israeli policy, because blurring them makes it harder to fight truebigotry and makes it more difficult to intelligently discuss U.S. foreign policy.Americans should be free to discuss the activities of groups that arepushing the United States to support Israel generously and unconditionally,in the same way that we examine the political activities of other interestgroups without having to worry about being smeared or marginalized.

CONCLUSION

The various strategies that groups in the lobby employ—as discussed in thischapter and the previous one—are mutually reinforcing. If politicians knowthat it is risky to question Israeli policy or the United States' unyielding supportfor Israel, then it will be harder for the mainstream media to locate authoritativevoices that are willing to disagree with the lobby's views. If public

discourse about Israel can be shaped so that most Americans have generallypositive impressions of the Jewish state, then politicians will have even morereason to follow the lobby's lead. Playing the anti-Semitism card stifles discussioneven more and allows myths about Israel to survive unchallenged.Although other interest groups employ similar strategies in varying form,most of them can only dream of having the political muscle that pro-Israelorganizations have amassed. The question, therefore, is what effect does theIsrael lobby have on U.S. foreign policy? Is its influence in the American nationalinterest, or has it encouraged policies that are bad for the UnitedStates and even for Israel itself? It is to that question that we now turn.

PART II

THE LOBBY IN ACTION

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

The Israel lobby's influence would not be especially worrisome if its agendawere limited to making sure that Congress continued to provide foreign aidfor the Jewish state. Although there might be better uses for this money, theUnited States is a wealthy country and can afford the $3 billion-plus that itannually provides to Israel. But the lobby's efforts have not been limited toforeign aid. Like a number of other special interest groups, it also works toinfluence various aspects of U.S. foreign policy, in its case focusing primarilyon the Middle East. These efforts to shape policy in the region areunderstandable: although material aid is valuable, it is even more helpful tohave the world's only superpower bring its vast capabilities to bear on Israel'sbehalf.

Even so, this aspect of the lobby's agenda would be of little concern if itencouraged policies that were obviously in America's best interest. In thenext five chapters, we show that this is not the case. The United States hasthree main interests in the Middle East today: keeping Persian Gulf oil flowingto world markets, discouraging the spread of weapons of mass destruction,and reducing anti-American terrorism originating in the region. Thereare instances where the lobby has supported policies that advanced these interests,but many of the policies that organizations in the lobby have promotedover time have ultimately left the United States worse off. That wasnot their intention, of course, and the groups and individuals who pushedfor these policies undoubtedly believed that the actions they favored wouldbe good for the United States. They were wrong. Indeed, although thesepolicies were intended to benefit Israel, many of them

have damaged Israel'sinterests as well.

THE LOBBY'S AGENDA

In addition to preserving U.S. aid to Israel, groups in the lobby have soughtto ensure that American power is used to shape the Middle East environmentin ways they believed would advance Israel's interests, especially in security.In practical terms, this meant backing Israel in its long struggle withthe Palestinians and directing American power against other movements orstates that might be at odds with Israel.

As noted in Chapter 4, there are differences within the pro-Israel communityabout the virtues of creating a viable Palestinian state, with the leadersof the lobby tending to be more hostile to that idea than the rank and file.Nevertheless, few supporters of Israel advocate an evenhanded policy towardthe two sides, and fewer still have called for the United States to pressureIsrael to produce a settlement.

Most pro-Israel groups—and especially the central organizations in thelobby—also want the United States to help Israel remain the dominant militarypower in the Middle East. In addition to maintaining generous aid to

Israel's military establishment, these groups favor using American power todeal with Israel's main regional adversaries: Iran, Iraq under Saddam, andSyria. At the very least, the lobby wants America to contain these so-calledrogue states and to make sure that they do not acquire nuclear weapons.Some of these groups have gone farther, advocating that the United Statesuse its power to topple the regimes in Iran, Iraq, and Syria and replace themwith leaders willing to live peacefully with Israel. In the best of all possibleworlds, Washington would transform the entire region by spreading democracyand drying up support for terrorism against both the United States andIsrael.

Finally, the lobby has pushed American leaders to disarm Hezbollah andhelp create a Lebanon that is friendly to Israel. But these goals cannot beaccomplishedwithout radically changing the behavior of Iran and Syria, sincethose states support and arm Hezbollah, and Syria has a long history of involvementin Lebanese politics. Given these and other links among Israel'sadversaries, the lobby tends to see all of them as part of a seamless web ofevil that the United States must at least keep at bay if not destroy

To deal with these different threats to Israel, key groups within the lobbyhave encouraged the United States to deploy substantial military forces inthe Middle East. As we will show, the lobby played an important role inmaking the case for war with Iraq, which was the first step in a broader campaignof regional transformation. Even today, many of Israel's most vocifer

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

ous supporters oppose withdrawing American forces from Iraq and redeployingthem outside of the region, because keeping U.S. forces in theneighborhood leaves them well positioned to threaten Israel's adversaries orto take action against them should the need or the opportunity arise.

THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL AFTER 9/11

The lobby made considerable progress pushing its agenda during the 1990s,even though it was more difficult to make the case that Israel was a strategicasset for the United States once the Cold War was over. Then came theattacks of September 11, 2001, which forced Americans to focus considerableattention on the Arab and Islamic world, and especially the MiddleEast. This was a critical moment for Israel and the lobby.

Would the Bush administration conclude that close ties between theUnited States and Israel were fueling anti-American terrorism, and would ittherefore try to improve its image in the Arab and Islamic world by distancingitself—even if only slightly—from Israel? Specifically, would PresidentBush put pressure on the Sharon government to end its efforts to colonizethe West Bank and instead create a viable Palestinian state? Might theUnited States also begin to reduce its military presence in the wider MiddleEast, which had grown considerably since 1990 and which had worked toIsrael's advantage?

These were not idle fears. As we describe in Chapter 2, there was compellingevidence showing that Osama bin Laden was committed to the Palestiniancause and was angry at the United States for backing Israel so strongly.It was also clear that he deeply resented the presence of American troops onArab soil, especially in Saudi Arabia, and that the combination of these twopolicies was fueling Arab and Islamic anger at the United States and facilitatingal Qaeda's efforts. Might the United States respond to this situation by returningto its earlier position as an "offshore balancer" in the Middle East andpressing more vigorously for an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Therewere precedents for precisely this sort of response: the Reagan administrationhad briefly deployed U.S. troops in Lebanon in the early 1980s but hadremoved them after a suicide bomber killed 241 marines in Beirut. PresidentsJimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush had also made genuine progresstoward peace in the region, but only by putting pressure on Israel and by payingless attention to the lobby.

Yet despite these concerns, the post-September 11 focus on Middle

East threats was also an opportunity for Israel and its American advocates.If the Bush administration could be convinced that Israel was a critical allyin the war on terror and that Israel's enemies were America's enemies aswell, then perhaps the United States could be induced to back Sharon'shard-line approach toward the Palestinians and to take aim at Israel's regionaladversaries: Hezbollah, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. In essence, Americanpolicy makers had to be shown that it made good strategic sense for theUnited States to try to rid the Middle East of Israel's foes, which were alsosaid to be America's foes. As one would expect, Israel and key groups in thelobby began working together to turn this opportunity into a reality.

Their efforts succeeded. The Bush administration eventually embracedthe lobby's views about the new threat environment and rejected the alternativeparadigm. Not only did the United States gradually adopt Israel's policypreferences toward the Palestinians, Iran, and the rest of the region, italso adopted many of Israel's justifications for these policies. American andIsraeli leaders began to sound as if they were speaking from the same page.

The conventional wisdom is that this outcome was overdetermined. Inthis version of events, Bush and Sharon (and now Ehud Olmert) saw theworld in essentially the same way. The president and his advisers needed littleencouragement from the lobby, because they had accepted Israel's viewson how to deal with the Arab Islamic world from the very beginning, andeven more so after 9/11.1

This interpretation of how U.S. Middle East policy evolved after 9/11 isnot accurate, because it overlooks the very real disagreements that occasionallyemerged between the Bush administration and the Israeli government.In the first year after September 11, Bush and Sharon clashed on a numberof occasions over the Palestinian issue. Even after those disputes were resolved,there were still important differences between them regarding thePalestinians. In fact, Bush's efforts to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflictsometimes reflected the alternative paradigm, which called for greatereffort to promote Israeli-Palestinian peace and defuse Arab hostility Thisview enjoyed considerable support within the State Department and the

U.S. intelligence community, as well as among the uniformed military. Bushalso had important differences with Israel and the lobby over U.S. policytoward Syria. On both the Palestinian and Syrian issues, however, the lobbysuccessfully pressured Bush to change

course and to adopt its policy preferencesinstead.Furthermore, the lobby played a critical role in shaping U.S. policytoward Iraq and Iran, as well as the Bush administration's grand scheme for

transforming the Middle East into a sea of democracies. And the lobbyworked overtime to convince Americans that Israel was in the right duringits war in Lebanon in the summer of 2006 and to ensure that politiciansfrom both parties supported Israel unreservedly.

These are controversial claims and should not be made lightly. Both beforeand during the war in Iraq, a number of public figures suggested thatPresident Bush's Middle East policy—especially his decision to invadeIraq—was at least partly intended to benefit Israel. Not surprisingly, both Israelisand prominent pro-Israel Americans challenged this view, in somecases invoking the familiar charge that such individuals were anti-Semites.But controversial or not, the issue here is a factual one: Did the lobby exerta significant influence on U.S. Middle East policy? And if so, were the resultsbeneficial for the United States or for Israel? The answer to the firstquestion is clearly yes, and we believe the answer to the second question isemphatically no.

Let us look more closely at the Bush administration's policies in the MiddleEast, starting with its support for Israel's policies in the Occupied Territories,followed by an examination of its decision to invade Iraq. We will then

consider Washington's broader policy of regional transformation, paying specialattention to its policy toward Syria and Iran. Finally, we will examineAmerica's handling of the 2006 Lebanon war. We argue that in each case,

U.S. policy would have been different if the lobby were not as powerful, or ifthe main groups within it had favored a different approach. America's actionswould have also have been more in line with its national interest, and betterfor Israel as well.

7

THE LOBBY VERSUS THE PALESTINIANS

It is now largely forgotten, but in the fall of 2001, and again in the spring of2002, the Bush administration sought to reduce anti-American sentiment inthe Arab and Islamic world by pressing Israel to halt its expansionist policiesin the Occupied Territories and by advocating the creation of a Palestinianstate. Following the September 11 attacks, American policy makers believedthat shutting down the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or at least making a seriousattempt to do so, would undermine support for terrorist groups like al Qaedaand facilitate the building of an international coalition against terrorism—which might even include states like Iran and Syria.1

Yet the Bush administration was unable to persuade Jerusalem to changeits policies, and Washington instead ended up backing Israels hard-line approachtoward the Palestinians. Over time, Bush and his lieutenants alsoadopted Israels justifications for this approach, and U.S. and Israeli rhetoricbecame similar. A Washington Post headline in February 2003 summarizedthe situation: "Bush and Sharon Nearly Identical on Mideast Policy."2 Thelobby's influence was one of the central reasons for this shift.

The story begins in late September 2001. President Bush began pushingIsraeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to show restraint in the Occupied Territoriesand to do everything possible to contain the violence of the SecondIntifada. The administration put what the New York Times described as"enormous pressure" on Sharon to allow Israeli foreign minister ShimonPeres to meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, even though Bush washighly critical of Arafat's leadership.3 In early October, the new Americanpresident said publicly for the first time that he supported a Palestinianstate. This

event was itself a surprising development, since even President

Clinton, who had worked assiduously for a two-state solution, did not dareutter the words "Palestinian state" in public until his last month in office.4Bush had emphasized before 9/11 that he intended to take a hands-off approachtoward the Arab-Israeli conflict, which makes his sudden interest inthis issue especially revealing.

Israeli leaders were alarmed by these developments, fearing that Washingtonmight "sell out" the Jewish state to win favor with the Arabs. TheWashington Post reported that "sources close to Sharon say he is furious at

U.S. attempts to enlist Iran, Syria and other states that have sponsored attackson Israel into the U.S.-led coalition."5 In early October, Sharonerupted, accusing Bush of trying "to appease the Arabs at our expense." Israel,he warned, "will not be Czechoslovakia."6 Hours after making thesecomments, the Israel Defense Forces invaded several Palestinian areas inHebron.7Bush was reportedly angry at Sharon's likening his actions to NevilleChamberlain's capitulation at Munich, and White House press secretary AriFleischer called Sharon's remarks "unacceptable."8 The Israeli prime ministeroffered a pro forma apology, but the basic problem remained unresolved.9Later in October, following the assassination of Israeli Minister of TourismRehavam Zeevi by a renegade Palestinian splinter group, the IDF launchedanother large-scale incursion into Palestinian-controlled territory in the West

Bank. Bush met personally with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres anddemanded a quick withdrawal, saying that he hoped "the Israelis would movetheir troops as quickly as possible."10 The Israeli government rejected that demandand said it would leave when it was satisfied that Arafat had crackeddown on Palestinian terrorists. The Guardian wrote that Ariel Sharon had"provoked the most bruising confrontation with Washington since GeorgeBush came to power, flatly rejecting a demand to end an occupation of Palestinianlands that threatens the survival of Yasser Arafat."11

Sharon and the pro-Israel lobby moved quickly to resolve this growing disputeby convincing the Bush administration and the American people thatthe United States and Israel faced a common threat from terrorism. Israeliofficials and key groups in the lobby would repeatedly emphasize over thenext few years that there was no real difference between Arafat and Osamabin Laden and that therefore the United States and Israel should isolate thePalestinians' elected leader and not politically engage with him. As Sharontold his self-described "longtime supporter," the columnist William Safire ofthe New York Times, in December 2001, "You in America are in a war againstterror. We in Israel are in a war against terror. It's the same war."12

Sharon's concerns about U.S. Middle East policy actually began immediatelyafter 9/11, several weeks before Bush first expressed his support fora Palestinian state. He had a telephone conversation with American Jewishleaders on September 14, in which he made it clear that he was worried thatthe Bush administration would treat Arafat differently from bin Laden andthat Bush would try to be tough on Israel as a way of winning Arab supportfor the war on terrorism. Sharon asked those leaders for their help.1 3 But littlehappened in the wake of that conversation, in part because almosteveryone in the United States was still reeling from the events of 9/11, butalso because it was not clear at that point where American policy washeaded. In that uncertain moment, the Project for the New American Centuryreleased an open letter to Bush on September 20, signed by manyneoconservatives, including William J. Bennett, Eliot Cohen, Aaron Friedberg,Reuel Marc Gerecht, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Jeane Kirkpatrick,William Kristol, Richard Perle, and Norman Podhoretz. The letterdescribed Israel as "America's staunchest ally against international terrorism"and called for the president to "fully support our fellow democracy." Italso recommended that the United States cut off all support for the PalestinianAuthority.14

The broad outlines of Bush's policy to defeat terrorism became muchclearer after he backed a two-state solution, and neither Sharon nor thelobby was happy with the new agenda. The American Israel Public AffairsCommittee immediately responded to Bush's comments about a Palestinianstate by issuing a statement declaring that the advisers who were pushingthis idea on Bush were "undermining America's war against terrorism. Theyare encouraging the president to reward, rather than punish those that harborand support terrorism."15 At the same time, Mortimer Zuckerman, thechairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations,said that Bush was pursuing "a very short-sighted and erroneouspolicy."16 Pro-Israel forces began repeating this basic message at everyopportunity.

Influential figures in the lobby began to put pressure on the Bush administrationto allow the IDF to remain in the Palestinian areas it had recentlyreoccupied for as long as Sharon saw fit. Abraham Foxman, the head of theAnti-Defamation League, wrote a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powellon October 23, in which he said that he was "extremely troubled" by theState Department's demand that Israel withdraw its forces from the recentlyseized areas. "We consider such comments to be inappropriate," he wrote,"and contrary to the long-standing American policy that Israel has the right

to defend itself. The world is uniting to fight terrorism and unfortunately,the Palestinian Authority has refused to take steps to stem violence and terrorism."17 Zuckerman echoed this view, saying Bush's effort to press Israel

was "inappropriate, intemperate and defies logic in the face of U.S. effortsin the war on terrorism."18

The lobby also worked the halls of Congress. On November 16, eightyninesenators sent Bush a letter praising him for refusing to meet with Arafatuntil the Palestinian leader took the necessary steps to end the violenceagainst Israel. They also demanded that the United States not restrain Israelfrom retaliating against the Palestinians and insisted that the administrationstate publicly that it stood steadfastly behind Israel. According to the NewYork Times, the letter "stemmed from a meeting two weeks ago betweenleaders of the American Jewish community and key senators," adding thatAI PAC was "particularly active in providing advice on the letter."1 9

By late November, relations between Jerusalem and Washington had improvedconsiderably. This was due in part to the lobby's efforts, but also toAmerica's initial victory in Afghanistan, which reduced the perceived needfor Arab support in dealing with al Qaeda. Sharon visited the White Housein early December and had a friendly meeting with Bush. In fact, just beforethe meeting began, the IDF attacked targets in Gaza in response to threesuicide bombings in Israel. Bush neither criticized the Israelis nor askedthem for restraint in the future. The White House spokesman emphasizedinstead that "Israel is a sovereign government" and that it "has a right to livein security." At the same time, Bush demanded that Arafat do more to stopterrorism against Israel.2 0

Sharon visited the White House again in February 2002 and had anotheramicable visit with Bush. The Israeli prime minister reiterated the accusationthat Arafat was supporting terrorism and identified him as the principalobstacle to settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Bush was now clearlyreceptiveto this line of argument. He believed reports that Arafat was behindthe controversial Karine A incident that had occurred a month earlier, inJanuary 2002. The Karine A was a freighter loaded with fifty tons of weaponsand explosives that was apparently sailing from Iran when it was captured bythe Israeli navy in the Red Sea. Its final destination appeared to be Gaza, althoughthe evidence at the time was not clear. In fact, some argued that thearms were bound for Hezbollah in Lebanon.2 1

While there was no definitive evidence that directly implicated Arafat,the Israeli government and the lobby worked hard to make the case thatArafat had procured the weapons and explosives to abet his terrorism cam

paign against Israel.2 2 The Palestinian leader denied responsibility for theKarine A, and Secretary of State Colin Powell and others said that they hadnot seen evidence that contradicted Arafat's claim of innocence.2 3 In theend, however, Bush agreed with Israel and its supporters. With Sharon at hisside at the White House, Bush said, "Mr. Arafat has heard from us. I can'tbe any more clear .. . He must do everything in his power to fight terror.Obviously, we were, at first, surprised, and then extremely disappointedwhen the Karine A showed up loaded with weapons, weapons that couldhave only been intended for one thing, which was to terrorize."24

THE LOBBY HUMILIATES BUSH

Although the American and Israeli positions were now converging, troublebetween the two states erupted again in late March 2002, when a Hamassuicide bomber killed thirty Israelis at a Passover seder. The Palestinian Authorityimmediately denounced the attack and pledged to prosecute thoseresponsible. But its dismal record of punishing militants left the Israeliscold; they had had enough. Sharon launched Operation Defensive Shield inwhich the IDF resumed control of virtually all of the major Palestinian areason the West Bank.2 5 Bush knew right away that Israel's action would damageAmerica's image in the Arab and Islamic world and undermine the waron terrorism, so he demanded on April 4 that Sharon "halt the incursionsand begin withdrawal." He underscored this message two days later, sayingthis meant "withdrawal without delay." On April 7, Bush's national securityadviser, Condoleezza Rice, told reporters that "without delay' means without

delay. It means now." That same day Secretary of State Powell set out forthe Middle East to pressure all sides to stop fighting and start negotiating.

The administration soon came under fire to adopt a different approach.A key target was Powell, who was not only considered unsympathetic, if nothostile, to Israel, but was also planning to meet with Arafat during his MiddleEast trip. The secretary of state immediately began feeling the heat fromstaunch supporters of Israel in the vice president's office and the Pentagon,who pushed Bush and Rice to abandon the effort to restrain Israel. Rice wasconstantly on the phone to Powell, sometimes sounding like she was givinghim a "dressing-down." He believed that her concerns reflected "the viewsof somebody in the White House."2 6

Neoconservatives in the media piled on Powell as well. Robert Kaganand William Kristol wrote in the Weekly Standard on April 11 that Powell

had "virtually obliterated the distinction between terrorists and those fightingterrorists."27 The following day David Brooks, then working for theWeekly Standard, described Powell's trip on the NewsHour with Jim Lehreras "a disaster as opposed to an unmitigated disaster." He went on to say thatPowell "hurt U.S. prestige . . . shredded U.S. policy in the Middle East. . .and most importantly, he hurt our moral clarity."28 Former Israeli PrimeMinister Benjamin Netanyahu, who was making Israel's case in the UnitedStates at the time, said even before Powell arrived in Israel that his trip"won't amount to anything."29 He was right: the balance of power inside theadministration shifted against Powell so quickly and completely that hisdeputy in Washington called the secretary in Israel and told him, "I'm holdingback the fucking gates here. They're eating cheese on you."3 0 Powelllater said that his trip to the Middle East was "ten of the most miserabledays imaginable."31

Powell got the message, as reflected in his behavior at a joint press conferencehe held with Ariel Sharon before leaving Israel. "The Secretary ofState's language, body and verbal," John Simpson of the Sunday Telegraphwrote, "certainly were not that of the paymaster coming to call a client to account.Far from it. Mr. Powell seemed ingratiating, deferential; no doubt herealizes how much support Mr. Sharon has back in Washington and howmuch influence his friends have there with the President."3 2 Netanyahu'sprediction proved

correct. Powell's trip did not "amount to anything."

A second target was Bush himself, who was being pressed by Jewishleaders and Christian evangelicals. Tom DeLay and Dick Armey were especiallyoutspoken about the need to support Israel, and DeLay and SenateMinority Leader Trent Lott visited the White House on April 10 and personallywarned Bush to back off.3 3 On the following day, according to Timemagazine, "a group of Evangelical leaders led by the Reverend Jerry Falwelland former presidential candidate Gary Bauer sent Bush a letter demandingthat the Administration end pressure' on Sharon to withdraw from the WestBank. After Falwell adjured his followers to do the same, the White Housewas flooded with calls and e-mails. The next day, sources say, senior presidentialaides phoned Falwell to reassure him that Bush stood behindSharon."3 4

The first external sign that Bush was caving came that same day (April11)—only one week after he insisted that Sharon withdraw his forces—when Ari Fleischer said the president believed that Sharon was "a man ofpeace."35 Bush publicly repeated this statement on April 18 on Powell's returnfrom his abortive mission, and the president also told reporters that Sharon

had responded satisfactorily to his call for a full and immediate withdrawal.36Sharon had done no such thing, but Bush was no longer willing to make anissue of it. Israel announced the formal end of Defensive Shield on April 21,but IDF forces remained in many Palestinian areas, and significant elementsof the Israeli control regime are still in force today.

Other groups in the lobby kept up the pressure. The Conference of Presidentsand the United Jewish Communities sponsored a major rally inWashington in mid-April, with appearances by Armey, Netanyahu, Zuckerman,House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, and other prominent officials.The crowd even booed Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz(shouting "Down with Arafat") when he briefly referred to Palestinian sufferingand the possibility of a Palestinian state. Morton Klein, the head of theZionist Organization of America, said that "if Bush doesn't get the messageto stop pressuring Israel, we will have lost a great opportunity with this rally."Responding to the gathering, an unnamed administration official remarkedthat "policy is not based on what's popular." But the same official also admittedthat "we hear so much from Jewish leaders, to see that many Jews turnout for this [rally] will just speak volumes."3 7

Meanwhile, Congress was also moving to back Sharon. Netanyahu visitedCapitol Hill in mid-April, where he met forty senators, accompanied bya "security cordon fit for a head of state."3 8 On May 2, it overrode theadministration'sobjections and passed two resolutions reaffirming support for Israel(the Senate vote was 94 to 2; the House version passed 352 to 21). Bothresolutions emphasized that the United States "stands in solidarity with Israel,"and that the two countries are, to quote the House resolution, "nowengaged in a common struggle against terrorism." The House version alsocondemned "the ongoing support of terror by Yasir Arafat," who was portrayedas a central element of the terrorism problem.3 9

A few days later, a bipartisan congressional delegation on a fact-findingmission in Israel publicly proclaimed that Sharon (who was then in Washingtonmeeting with Bush) should resist the administration's pressure tonegotiate with Arafat.40 Then, on May 9, a House appropriations subcommitteemet to consider giving Israel an extra $200 million to fight terrorism.The White House was opposed to the package and Secretary of State Powelltook the lead and met with congressional leaders in an attempt to stop it.But the lobby backed it, just as it had helped author the two congressionalresolutions. Powell lost and Bush reluctantly signed the legislation, givingIsrael the money.4 1

Sharon and the lobby had taken on the president of the United States

and his secretary of state and triumphed. Chemi Shalev, a

journalist for theIsrael newspaper Ma'ariv, reported that Sharon's aides "could not hide theirsatisfaction in view of Powell's failure. Sharon saw the white in PresidentBush's eyes, they bragged, and the President blinked first." Indeed, Bush'shumiliation was not lost on commentators around the world. Spain's leadingdaily, El Pats, expressed the views of many outside observers when it commented,"If a country's weight is measured by its degree of influence onevents, the superpower is not the USA but Israel."4 2 But it was pro-Israelforces in the United States, not Sharon or Israel, that played the key role inthwarting Bush's efforts to pursue a more evenhanded policy.

"THE MORE THINGS CHANGE . . ."

Despite these setbacks, Bush continued looking for a way to end the SecondIntifada and create a viable Palestinian state living in peace next door to Israel.He understood that it is in America's national interest to settle theArab-Israeli conflict as soon as possible. Bush has not come close to achievingthat goal, however, mainly because there has been little change in thebalance of power between Bush and the lobby since the spring of 2002. Thissituation has given Israeli leaders considerable leverage over Bush's MiddleEast policies and enables them to ignore or neutralize policies they dislike.

Seeking to move beyond his troubles in the spring of 2002, Bush gave amajor speech on the Middle East on June 24. 4 3 It was a noteworthy addressfor two reasons. First, Bush maintained that Arafat had to give up power beforethe peace process could move forward. "Peace," he said, "requires a newand different political Palestinian leadership." In effect, as David Landaupointed out in Haaretz, "Yasser Arafat, the seemingly immortal leader of thePalestinian national movement, was politically assassinated .. . by President

George W. Bush."4 4 The Israelis, who had been calling for Arafat's isolationfor months, were ecstatic. In fact, at least two prominent conservativeIsraelis, Natan Sharansky and Benjamin Netanyahu, claimed that they hadplayed a major role in convincing Bush to insert that demand in hisspeech.4 5 Haaretz ran a story on the speech with the headline, "Analysis:Ariel Sharon Agrees to His Own Ideas."4 6

Second, Bush called for creating a Palestinian state by 2005. In pursuitof that goal, he emphasized that "Israeli settlement activity in the occupiedterritories must stop" and, as the security situation improved, "Israel forcesneed to withdraw fully to positions they held prior to September 28, 2000

[the start of the Second Intifada]." Bush was widely criticized for not sayingmore about what the final settlement would look like and how he planned toget from here to there.4 7 While the speech was certainly vague about theparticulars of a future agreement, Bush's comments were nevertheless important.At the time, the Bush administration was working closely with theEuropean Union, Russia, and the UN to fashion a "Road Map" leading to anegotiated peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The plan of the socalledQuartet was specifically designed to build on the main points laid outin Bush's speech.

In essence, the Bush administration decided in the summer of 2002 thatthe Road Map was the best way to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.But little progress was made in implementing it until the spring of 2003.The delay was due to the fact that it took time to convince Arafat to stepaside and for the Quartet to work out the details of the Road Map. Furthermore,the Bush administration was busy preparing for war with Iraq, whichit invaded on March 19, 2003. Serious movement on the Road Map finallybegan on March 7, when Arafat signaled that he was reducing his own politicalpower by nominating Mahmoud Abbas to be the prime minister of thePalestinian Authority.48 A week later, on March 14, Bush proclaimed thathe was ready to promote the Road Map. On April 30, the Quartet releasedthe details of that peace plan.4 9

Then in early June, the president traveled to the Middle East to push theRoad Map and try to strengthen Abbas's hand vis-à-vis Arafat. Bush's prestigewas sky-high in the wake of the successful ouster of Saddam. His triumphant"Mission Accomplished" photo op on the USS

Abraham Lincolnhad occurred the previous month, the problems of postwar reconstruction inIraq were barely apparent, and Bush's popularity at home was at near-recordlevels. He was in an ideal position to press all sides to get serious aboutpeace. He met first with Arab leaders in Egypt on June 3 and then the followingday with Abbas and Sharon in Aqaba, Jordan. Before the trip, reporterswere skeptical about whether Bush could put pressure on Israel toachieve his goals, especially with his reelection campaign looming in 2004."Of course I can," he told them. "Listen, if I were afraid of making the decisionsnecessary—for political reasons—to move the process forward, Iwouldn't be going."5 0

The meetings were cordial and Bush's efforts to get directly involved inthe peace process appeared to be off to a good start. But the Road Map wentnowhere. Despite occasionally paying lip service to the Quartet's plan,Sharon was opposed to creating a viable Palestinian state, and thus he had

no interest in negotiating with the Palestinians, since the aim of such negotiationswas to create just such a state in the Occupied Territories. Hisopposition to the Road Map was clear well before March 2003. The WashingtonPost opined in an editorial on December 16, 2002, that althoughSharon "has been telling voters about his readiness to support the Bushscheme," the fact is that his "envoys have been harshly criticizing the draft'road map' in meetings with U.S. officials. According to Israeli press reports,Mr. Sharon himself dismissed the administration's plan as 'irrelevant' in a recentcabinet meeting."5 1

Sharon did not say much publicly in mid-March 2003, when Bush announcedthat he was pushing the Road Map forward, mainly because he didnot want to criticize Bush when the United States was getting ready to invadeIraq.5 2 Nevertheless, Sharon's views on the plan had not changed, asChemi Shalev made clear in an article in the Forward: "The strategic goal ofSharon and his advisors is ultimately to undermine the road map and to excludethe three remaining members [the EU, UN, and Russia] of the socalledMadrid Quartet . . . from active involvement in the peace process."5 3In mid-April, Haaretz declared in an editorial that Sharon "has not internalizedthe conceptual change necessary to achieve a peace arrangement basedon compromise. Apparently . . . the prime minister has yet to give up the visionof the settlements and the creeping annexation of the West Bank."5 4

Given Sharon's opposition to the Road Map, it is hardly surprising thatthe heads of the key organizations in the lobby viewed Bush's plan as the"road map to nowhere," to quote Conference of Presidents chairman Zuckerman.5 5 Within hours after Bush said on March 14 that he was getting behindthe Road Map, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice met at theWhite House with a delegation of Jewish leaders. The aim of the meeting,according to an article in Haaretz, was "to neutralize American Jewish reservationsabout the plan."56 But according to the same article, "Rice was unableto allay the concerns of many of the participants at the meeting."Abraham Foxman, the head of the ADL, and Malcolm Hoenlein, the executivevice chairman of the Conference of Presidents, were especially critical.Although Hoenlein said it was necessary to wait for Israel's reaction to theplan, he emphasized that the American Jewish community would supportIsrael if it expressed reservations.

AIPAC also sponsored a letter to President Bush on Capitol Hill, urginghim not to put pressure on Israel regarding the Road Map and demandingthat the Palestinians be required to comply fully with the plan's securityrequirementsbefore Israel had to make any concessions. By early May, 85

senators and 283 representatives had signed the letter.5 7 While AIPAC ultimatelyendorsed the Road Map—with qualifications—it did not campaignto win it support in Congress, which "effectively left the lobbying front opento groups that openly oppose the plan."5 8 Many pro-Israel commentatorslambasted the administration's decision to push the Road Map forward. Forexample, Charles Krauthammer, writing in the Washington Post, maintainedthat "proceeding along the

road map" as long as Arafat retained any powerwas "diplomatic suicide."5 9 Thomas L. Friedman of the New York Times,however, was critical of the major Jewish organizations for not supportingthe peace plan.6 0 Apart from more dovish groups such as the Tikkun Communityand the Israel Policy Forum, there were few pro-Israel groups enthusiasticallybacking the Road Map. That meant it had no future.

Consequently, Israeli hard-liners were not worried much about the RoadMap when its details were spelled out on April 30. In an article in Haaretzthe following day, Bradley Burston asked, "So why are these people smiling?"6 1 The answer is that the Bush administration had privately reached aseries of understandings with Sharon and his lieutenants that greatly allayedtheir fears about the Quartet's peace plan.6 2 In fact, the Financial Times reportedthat Elliott Abrams and Stephen Hadley, two key players on the NationalSecurity Council, secretly assured Sharon "that he would not face USpressure over the road map."6 3

Still, Sharon must have been worried after Bush's trip to the Middle Eastin early June 2003, which was widely seen as an important step in promotingthe president's peace effort. Shortly after the president returned to theUnited States, Israel tried but failed to kill Abdel Aziz Rantisi, a key Hamasleader. It was the first of seven targeted assassinations in five days.6 4 Sharonhad promised Secretary of State Powell in May that Israel would stop targetedassassinations unless they involved a "ticking bomb," which wasclearly not the case in this instance.6 5 Indeed, Hamas had announced theday before the attack that it was willing to renew talks about a cease-fire.6 6Moreover, the Forward reported that at the Aqaba summit meeting Sharonhad "agreed to avoid actions that might 'inflame' the situation and weaken

the rookie Palestinian prime minister."6 7 Israeli commentators understoodthat the Israeli prime minister was now attempting to sink the Road Map."The curious timing of the assassination campaign," a Haaretz correspondentwrote, "was not lost on Israelis."6 8

Bush was not pleased. Yet he only mildly rebuked Sharon, saying onJune 10, "I am troubled by the recent Israeli helicopter gunship attacks."His aides' remarks, according to the Washington Post, were only "slightly

stronger." But even the slightest criticism of Israel was unacceptable to thehard-liners in the lobby, who soon mobilized to check Bush's brief show ofindependence. DeLay had a private meeting with the president's aides andtold them that he would push forward a congressional resolution supportingIsrael if Bush continued to criticize it. On the evening of June 11, Bushhosted a dinner at the White House with one hundred Jewish leaders to celebratea new exhibit at the Holocaust Memorial Museum. Malcolm Hoenlein,who met privately with Bush that evening, said that the president "andothers at the White House recognized that their reaction could becounterproductive."Hoenlein went on to say that "people were taken a little abackby the comments and, from what everyone could tell, the White House waswell aware of it."6 9

By the next day, June 12, the White House had done another U-turn andwas firmly supporting Israel. The Washington Post reported that "in coordinatedstatements, White House and State Department officials tried to shiftthe diplomatic focus from Israeli actions to the commitments made by Arableaders at a summit last week in Egypt to cut off funding and support for terroristattacks against Israelis. Secretary of State Colin Powell made thatpoint in a round of phone calls to Arab foreign ministers."7 0 Ari Fleischer,the White House press secretary, said, "The issue is not Israel," it is "terroristswho are killing in an attempt to stop a hopeful process from moving forward."71 Later that month, the House passed a resolution—by a vote of 399to 5—expressing "solidarity with the Israeli people" and saying that Israelwas fully justified in using force to deal with terrorism.7 2

Bush had once again tried to curb Israeli actions that strengthened anti-Americanism in the Arab and Islamic world and undermined the administration'swar on terrorism, but he ended up suffering another humiliatingdefeat.7 3

Much the same pattern was evident in late July 2003, when the Bush administrationbegan to voice its objections to Israel's so-called security fence,which was widely seen as an Israeli attempt to create "facts on the ground"that would be a major obstacle to a negotiated settlement. The issue was notconstruction of the fence itself but rather its intended route, which in effectwould incorporate additional parts of the Occupied Territories and imposesignificant additional hardships on thousands of Palestinians.7 4 Bush ex

pressed his displeasure at a joint White House press conference with PalestinianPrime Minister Mahmoud Abbas on July 25: "I think the wall is aproblem, and I discussed this with Ariel Sharon. It is very difficult to developconfidence between the Palestinians and Israel with a wall snaking throughthe West Bank."7 5 But four days later at the White House, with Bush standingat his side, Sharon made it clear that he intended to continue buildingthe fence, although he said he would try to minimize the hardships itinflicted on the Palestinians. Bush did not challenge Sharon but insteadaccepted the prime minister's view that Palestinian terrorism was "the fundamentalobstacle to peace."7 6

Nevertheless, the Bush administration continued to express its unhappinesswith the security barrier. Secretary of State Powell suggested in an interview

that the fence was an Israeli attempt to appropriate Palestinian land,and Condoleezza Rice hinted that the administration might deduct the costof the fence from $9 billion in loan guarantees that the United States hadapproved in April.7 7 Israel's supporters in Congress mobilized and emphasizedto the White House, as Senator Charles Schumer put it, that if thepresident "flouts the will of Congress and tries to penalize Israel for defendingitself, Congress will do everything in its power to ensure that these loanguarantees are not held up."7 8 The Israelis themselves were not seriouslyconcerned. As one senior Israeli official put it, "We are not under any pressure. . . The United States is a very vibrant democracy, and this is a very politicallyoriented administration. Reality is made sometimes by politicalconstraints."7 9

The issue of loan guarantees would not go away, however, and in lateNovember the Bush administration said that it would cut $289.5 millionfrom the $3 billion in loan guarantees allocated to Israel earlier that year.The lobby did not protest strongly, mainly because the punishment waseffectively a weak slap on the wrist. The United States was not cuttingdirect foreign aid, the real meat and potatoes of its material support toIsrael. Reducing the loan guarantees by roughly 10 percent simply meantthat Israel had to pay a higher interest rate on a small portion of the overallamount it intended to borrow. The former director general of Israel's FinanceMinistry estimated that it would cost Israel about $4 million a year inhigher interest costs, which is not a lot of money for a prosperous state likeIsrael.8 0

The Bush administration won another small victory in the fall of 2003.Sharon was threatening to expel Arafat from the West Bank and send himinto exile. Powell and Rice told the Israelis that expelling the Palestinian

leader was unacceptable to the United States. They got the message andArafat remained in the West Bank.8 1

But these small victories were not indications of a changing tide. On thecontrary, in the fall of 2003, Sharon began moving to wreck George Bush'sRoad Map once and for all by pushing forward his own plan for unilateraldisengagement.8 2 In November, Sharon invited Elliott Abrams, the seniordirector for Near East and North African Affairs on the National SecurityCouncil (NSC) and a well-known neoconservative, to a secret meeting inRome. At the meeting, Sharon informed the American official that insteadof pursuing a negotiated

settlement, as called for in the Road Map, he intendedto impose his own settlement on the Palestinians.8 3 As the policyevolved in the next few months, it became clear that Israel would first withdrawall of its settlements from Gaza and turn that territory over to thePalestinians. Israel would then turn some areas of the West Bank over tothe Palestinians but keep large parts of that contested land for Israel.

Sharon's decision to leave these parts of the Occupied Territories to thePalestinians was based not on sympathy for their plight but on the fear thatif Israel retained Gaza and all of the West Bank, Arabs would soon outnumberJews in "greater Israel." The demographic issue, in other words, wasdriving the prime minister's policy.8 4

The Palestinians would have virtually no say in the process. Israel woulddictate the terms of the settlement, and in the end, the Palestinians wouldnot get a state of their own. Dov Weisglass, Sharon's closest adviser, madethis clear when he said that "the significance of what we did .. . is the freezingof the political process. And when you freeze that process you preventthe establishment of a Palestinian state and you prevent a discussion aboutthe refugees, the borders and Jerusalem. Effectively, this whole package thatis called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed fromour agenda indefinitely." Weisglass also said that Sharon's plan "is actuallyformaldehyde. It supplies the amount of formaldehyde that's necessary sothat there will not be a political process with the Palestinians."8 5

One might have expected Bush to be angry with Sharon and to try tokeep the Road Map alive, especially since the president, according to his nationalsecurity adviser, believed that "it is the only course that will bring

durable peace and security."86 But that is not what happened. In the springof 2004, Bush publicly embraced Sharon's unilateral approach, saying thatit was a "bold courageous step" and that the world owed Sharon a "thankyou" for pursuing it.8 7 Then in a dramatic shift, on April 14, Bush reversedthe stated policy of every president since Lyndon Johnson by proclaiming

that Israel would not have to return virtually all of the territories that itoccupied in 1967, and that Palestinian refugees would not be allowed to returnto their former homes in Israel but would have to settle in a new Palestinianstate.8 8 Previously, American policy was that the Israelis and thePalestinians would negotiate these issues. These moves sparked outrage inthe Middle East but were widely seen in the United States as smart politicsin a year when George Bush was up for reelection.8 9

Writing in early 2004, Thomas L. Friedman of the New York Times capturedthe essence of Bush's predicament regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:"Mr. Sharon has the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat under house arrestin his office in Ramallah, and he's had George Bush under house arrest in theOval Office. Mr. Sharon has Mr. Arafat surrounded by tanks, and Mr. Bushsurrounded by Jewish and Christian pro-Israel lobbyists, by a vice president,Dick Cheney, who's ready to do whatever Mr. Sharon dictates, and by politicalhandlers telling the president not to put any pressure on Israel in anelection year—all conspiring to make sure the president does nothing."90

During this entire period, the Israelis continued building settlements inthe West Bank, despite American protests and despite the fact that the RoadMap explicitly calls upon Israel to "freeze all settlement activity (includingnatural growth of settlements)."9 1 They also continued assassinating Palestinianleaders, sometimes at the most unhelpful moments—at least from a

U.S. perspective. For example, the IDF scuttled a proposed Palestiniancease-fire on July 22, 2002, when it killed Sheik Salah Shehada, a prominentHamas leader, and fourteen others (including nine children). TheWhite House denounced the attack as "heavy handed" but did not force Israelto end its targeted assassinations policy.92 As noted previously, the IDFundermined another emerging cease-fire in June 2003, when it tried butfailed to kill Rantisi, another Hamas leader.On March 22, 2004, Israel assassinated Hamas leader Sheik AhmedYassin with American-made Hellfire missiles. This move was generally perceivedas a serious blow to America's position in the

Middle East, not onlybecause U.S. weapons were used but also because many in the Arab worldbelieved that the Bush administration had given Israel the green light to killa paraplegic in a wheelchair. The Washington Post columnist Jim Hoaglandwrote in the wake of that killing, "With the possible exception of Charles deGaulle, no friendly foreign leader has complicated modern American diplomacyand strategy more consistently or gravely than Ariel Sharon. He pursuesIsrael's interests with a warrior's tenacity and directness that take away

the breath, and the options, of everyone else."9 3 Less than a month later, onApril 17, 2004, the IDF finally killed Rantisi.9 4

ARAFAT DIES AND NOTHING CHANGES

Arafat died in November 2004 and Abbas emerged as the Palestinian's newleader, eventually winning office in January 2005 in a peaceful democraticelection that was hailed by outside observers as free and fair. One wouldthink that this event would have been an ideal opportunity to push thepeace process forward, as Abbas recognized Israel, renounced terrorism,and was eager to work out a negotiated settlement to the conflict.9 5 Furthermore,Bush had just won reelection to a second term and thus was in aboutas good a position as any president could be to help bolster the moderate Abbas.The Bush administration embraced the new Palestinian leader from thestart, but it did virtually nothing to help him negotiate a viable state, and soultimately undermined his power base.

The main reason Bush did little to help Abbas was that he had alreadycommitted himself to supporting Sharon's plan (and that of his successor,Ehud Olmert) to disengage unilaterally from the Palestinians. Contrary tohis own pronouncements about the necessity of the Road Map, Bush wasbacking a strategy that held no promise of the Palestinians getting a viablestate of their own, which doomed the plan from the start.

Some pro-Israel groups like the Zionist Organization of America and theOrthodox organizations were opposed to giving up any territory to the Palestinians.But the major organizations like the Anti-Defamation League, theAmerican Jewish Congress, and the American Jewish Committee backed disengagement.Senior officials in the Conference of Presidents estimated thatsomewhere between 60 and 75 percent of the leaders favored the pullout,which was more than enough to ensure that the lobby ultimately backedSharon and Bush's shift in policy, although not with great enthusiasm.9 6

By refusing to negotiate with Abbas and making it impossible for himto deliver tangible benefits to the Palestinian people, Sharon contributeddirectly to Hamas's electoral victory in January 2006. The Haaretz columnistBradley Burston wrote just before that election, "If it appears to you . . .that Israel is Hamas' campaign manager in next week's elections for thePalestinian parliament, few would argue—especially in Hamas."9 7 WithHamas in power, Israel had another reason not to negotiate and the Bush

administration was even less likely to push them to talk with the Palestinians.

To make matters worse, Israel's policy of unilateral disengagement collapsedin the summer of 2006, about two months after Bush had hailed thepolicy during Ehud Olmert's first visit to the White House as the new primeminister.9 8 After pulling out of Gaza in August 2005, the Israelis effectivelycordoned off that small piece of real estate, making it impossible for thePalestinians living there to lead a decent life, much less have a state of theirown. The Palestinians in Gaza continued launching rockets into Israel, andthen they captured an Israeli soldier on June 25, 2006. The Israelis felt thatthe situation had become intolerable, so three days later they reenteredGaza.9 9 It quickly became apparent to most Israelis, and certainly to Olmert,that Israel would face a similar situation if it unilaterally withdrew fromsome parts of the West Bank and effectively

locked up the Palestinians leftbehind.

A few weeks later, on July 12, Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiersalong the Israel-Lebanon border, precipitating a war in which Hezbollahfired rockets and missiles into northern Israel. Given that Israel had unilaterallywithdrawn from southern Lebanon in 2000, this crisis reinforced thepoint that simply pulling back from parts of the West Bank would not by itselfend Israel's conflict with the Palestinians. Consequently, with the Israelipublic behind him, Olmert abandoned unilateral disengagement in the latesummer of 2006. In a candid interview with the Chinese news agency Xinhuain January 2007, Olmert said that when he took over from the incapacitatedSharon in January 2006, he was confident that a unilateral strategy, orwhat he called his "convergence plan," could solve the Palestinian problem.But he was wrong, and now, "under the existing circumstances, it would bemore practical to achieve a two-state solution through negotiations ratherthan [unilateral] withdrawal."10 0

RICE GETS "POWELLIZED"10 1

The Bush administration had also figured out that unilateralism was a losingstrategy, and it began pushing again for a negotiated settlement along thelines of the Road Map. In late 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Ricetook the lead in trying to get the Palestinian and Israeli leaders talkingto each other.10 2 Her goal was to start a discussion about what the broad

outlines of a comprehensive settlement—which she termed the "political

horizon"—should look like.

While Rice was pushing the Israelis and the Palestinians to negotiate seriously,the Saudis convinced the Arab League in March 2007 to reissue its2002 peace plan. The new proposal, like the original one, offered Israelpeace and normal relations not just with the Palestinians but with alltwenty-two members of the Arab League. In return, Israel would have towithdraw from all of the Occupied Territories and the Golan Heights, acceptthe establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state in the Occupied Territorieswith East Jerusalem as its capital, and negotiate a "just solution" tothe Palestinian refugee problem that was "agreed upon" by the relevant parties.10 3 The Saudis made it clear that the proposal was a basis for negotiation,not a take-it-or-leave-it deal.

Both the Americans and the Saudis had powerful incentives to put anend to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.10 4 Continuing U.S.support for Israeli policies in the Occupied Territories was not only helpingfuel America s terrorism problem, but it was making it difficult for the Bushadministration to get Arab states to help it deal with the war in Iraq andIran's nuclear program. The Saudis, for their part, wanted to work closelywith the Americans to contain Iran, but they were limited in what they coulddo because there was so much anger among the Saudi people over U.S. supportfor Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. The Saudis also wanted to endthe conflict, because Iran was gaining influence with radical Palestinianforces in the Occupied Territories.

Given these circumstances, conditions would seem ripe for seriousmovement forward in the peace process. But that did not happen. Olmertshowed little interest in the Arab League initiative, which appeared destinedto share the same fate as the 2002 peace proposal. The Israeli prime ministerwas unhappy with some parts of the proposal, such as the stipulationthat Israel would have to withdraw from all of the Occupied Territories. Healso rejected any compromise on the issue of a Palestinian "right of return,"telling the Jerusalem Post in March 2007, "I will not agree to any kind of Israeliresponsibility for this problem. Full stop." He went on to say that thereturn of even one Palestinian refugee to Israel was "out of the question."10 5

But that point of dispute and any others could have been dealt with inthe negotiations that would have ensued if Israel had agreed to talks on thebasis of the proposal. Haaretz put the point well in a late

March editorial: "Arealistic government would have rushed to embrace this willingness for

recognition and reconciliation, expressing reservations for what it does notaccept and seeking dialogue on the regional level."10 6 In mid-May, Olmertwas widely criticized for failing to seriously pursue peace with the Arabs,includingby two staunch supporters of Israel: Abraham Foxman of the ADLand the Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel. In the face of this mounting criticism,the prime minister responded by saying that Israel was willing to discuss theArab League initiative, but he has taken little action beyond his rhetoric. Instead,Israel has launched a diplomatic campaign to blame the Arabs for thefailure of the peace initiative.10 7

The Bush administration did nothing substantive to push Olmert to embracethe Arab League's proposal, although it did urge Arab leaders to alterthe proposal to Israel's liking.10 8 So far, Rice's own efforts to push the peaceprocess forward have come to naught. For starters, Rice made it clear in anearly February 2007 meeting with leaders from fifteen major Jewish organizationsthat not only would the administration refrain from putting pressureon Israel, but it would not offer its own suggestions on what the "politicalhorizon" might look like.10 9 Those concessions greatly limited the secretary'seffectiveness. Rice then traveled to Jerusalem where, on February 19, shebrought Olmert and Abbas together for talks. But Rice's efforts to revive thepeace talks were a bust, as the Israeli prime minister refused to discuss theoutlines of a possible settlement. In fact, both Olmert and Abbas refused toappear with her at the press conference afterward. Shortly thereafter, theNew York Times ran an editorial on the meeting titled "Charade in Jerusalem,"which pointed out that Rice could not even get the two leaders to

stand at her side while she read a "content-free joint statement to whichthey have grudgingly agreed."11 0

In late March 2007, Rice returned to Israel to meet with Olmert andraise the possibility that she might serve as a mediator between Israel andthe Palestinians. It was her seventh visit to Israel in eight months. Olmertflatly rejected the idea of Rice acting as a diplomatic broker, forcing her tocancel the press conference planned for after the meeting. The Daily Telegraph(London) headline the day after the Olmert-Rice meeting said it all:"Israel Snubs Condoleezza Rice."11 1 The secretary of state returned toWashington empty-handed and with little prospect that the Bush administrationwould make meaningful progress toward Arab-Israeli peace beforeleaving office.

This outcome, which is not only humiliating for the secretary of state butis contrary to America's national interest as well, is the result of at least twofactors. First, Olmert, like his predecessor Sharon, has no interest in nego

tiating a peace settlement with the Palestinians, because it would require Israelto give up almost all of the West Bank and create a viable Palestinianstate on that territory. Olmert has made it clear that he would be willing togive up some parts of the West Bank, but he intends to keep large parts of itfor Israel. Indeed, his government announced in late December 2006 that itwas constructing its first new settlement in the West Bank in ten years, andthe following month Israel announced that it planned to build new housesin Ma'aleh Adumim, Israels largest existing settlement.11 2 Israel would preferthe occupation to peace, if the latter means giving 95 percent or so of theWest Bank to the Palestinians.11 3

One might argue that the real obstacle to peace is not Israel but Hamas,which came to power in January 2006 and remains formally committedto Israel's destruction. There is no question that Hamas's growing staturewithin the Palestinian community complicated any efforts to achieve peace.Nevertheless, this problem is not insurmountable. If the Israelis were genuinelyinterested in reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians, theycould work with the Arab League, Abbas, and the more moderate elementswithin Hamas to push the peace process forward and isolate—or maybeeven convert—the rejectionists in Hamas and other radical groups like IslamicJihad.11 4 But instead, the Israelis have shown little enthusiasm forworking with the growing number of Arabs who are genuinely interested inmaking

peace with the Jewish state. By undermining moderates who want tonegotiate peace, this policy merely strengthens those factions that claimthat violence is the only effective tactic.

Second, pro-Israel forces in the United States have made it impossiblefor the United States, especially Secretary of State Rice, to push the Olmertgovernment toward peace. Inside the White House, the main obstacle toputting any kind of meaningful pressure on Israel is Elliott Abrams. He hashelp, however, from two powerful neoconservatives who work for the vicepresident, John Hannah and David Wurmser. The journalist Jim Lobe reportsthat various sources have told him that "Abrams has been working systematicallyto undermine any prospect for serious negotiations designed togive substance to Rice's hopes—and increasingly impatient demands bySaudi King Abdullah—of offering the Palestinians a political horizon' for afinal settlement."11 5

Abrams has a close relationship with Yoram Turbowitz, Olmert's chief ofstaff, and Shalom Turgeman, Olmert's diplomatic adviser, who all work togetherto make sure that the Bush administration does not push Israel topursue policies that Olmert dislikes. Daniel Levy, a former adviser in the Is

raeli prime minister's office, notes that "if Rice is getting too active with herpeace-making quest, then T + T (Yoram Turbowitz and Shalom Turgeman)

can always be dispatched to Elliott Abrams at the White House, who in turnwill enlist Cheney to keep the president in tow."11 6 Correspondingly, HenrySiegman, who long worked on Middle East issues at the Council on ForeignRelations, maintains that "every time there emerged the slightest hint thatthe United States may finally engage seriously in a political process, ElliottAbrams would meet secretly with Olmert's envoys in Europe or elsewhere toreassure them that there exists no such danger."117 Right before Rice arrivedin Israel for her February 19 meeting with Abbas and Olmert, the Israeliprime minister put the secretary of state in her place by letting the mediaknow that he had talked to Bush the day before and that "the prime ministerand president see eye-to-eye." As Aluf Benn and Shmuel Rosner wrotein Haaretz, "The message was unmistakable: What Rice had to say barelymattered."11 8

The extent to which the balance of power inside the Bush administrationis stacked against Rice is further illustrated by Philip Zelikow's resignation asthe State Department's counselor at the end of 2006. He was Rice's longtimefriend and coauthor and one of her closest advisers. By the late summer of2006, he was encouraging Rice to make a serious effort to negotiate a peaceagreement between Israel and the Palestinians. He felt that was essential ifWashington hoped to get the Arab states and the Europeans to form an effectivecoalition against Iran. He made this very point on September 15, 2006,in a speech at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.119

Following the speech, there was an immediate outcry from pro-Israelgroups, and, according to the New York Times, "The State Departmentquickly distanced itself from the speech, issuing a statement denying anylinkage, and Israeli officials, flustered by Mr. Zelikow's remarks, said Ms.Rice later assured the Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, that the UnitedStates saw the Iranian and Palestinian issues as two separate matters."12 0Zelikow announced he was leaving the State Department the followingmonth. He gave anodyne reasons for his departure in his resignation letter,although one unnamed White House source said that his departure was duein part to his unhappiness with U.S. Middle East policy. In early March2007, Rice named Eliot Cohen, a neoconservative who had signed all theearlier PNAC letters, as Zelikow's successor.12 1

Despite the restrictions on her room to maneuver, Rice has tried to helpstrengthen Abbas at the expense of Hamas. But the lobby has limited hereffectivenesson that front as well. Specifically, President Bush decided in late

January 2007 to give Abbas $86 million to beef up his security forces. ButCongresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY), a stalwart defender of Israel and thechair of an important appropriations subcommittee, held up the request.12 2Another pro-Israel lawmaker, Anthony Weiner, wrote to Rice and asked herto withdraw the requested money.12 3 Morton Klein, the president of theZionist Organization of America, weighed in, saying that Bush "should be astough on Abbas as he is on Hamas and al Qaeda."12 4

Klein's uncompromising views on Abbas were shared by many Jewishleaders.12 5 They were especially upset with Abbas for agreeing in February2007 to join a unity government with Hamas, even though the Palestinianpresident made it clear that he remained committed to negotiating a twostatesettlement and living in peace with Israel. AIPAC tried to push Congressto make it impossible for the U.S. government to deal with anyone inthe unity government, Abbas included; but that effort failed.12 6 To mollifyLowey, the administration reduced the requested amount to $59 million andstipulated that it would be used only for training, purchasing nonlethalequipment, and improving security at a critical crossing point between Israeland Gaza. Lowey consented to this arrangement and the money wasauthorized.12 7

Nevertheless, the Bush administration's efforts to isolate and marginalizeHamas backfired in June 2007, when Hamas preempted the American attemptto strengthen Fatah's security forces by driving them from Gaza andseizing power there. In a belated effort to bolster Abbas, Israel has promisedto release Palestinian prisoners as well as frozen Palestinian tax revenues,

and Jerusalem and Washington have lifted some economic restrictions. Butthere is no sign that Israel will give the Palestinian leader the one thing heneeds to establish his authority and trump the rejectionists: the realisticprospect of a viable state. Thus, the conflict will continue to fester, doingfurther damage to America's position in the Arab and Islamic world.

CONCLUSION

Absent the lobby, the Bush administration almost certainly would have beenmuch more self-interested and hard-nosed in pushing for peace between Israeland the Palestinians. After all, the United States has a rich history, especiallyin recent years, of using various tools to force other states to changetheir behavior to suit America's interests. Washington extracted repeatedconcessions from Soviet leaders as the Soviet Union broke up, and it later

pressed Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus to give up their nuclear arsenals.A similar effort eventually persuaded Libya to give up its own weapons ofmass destruction programs in exchange for a lifting of extensive economicsanctions. The Clinton administration fought an intense air war to forceSerbia to withdraw from Kosovo in 1999, and the Bush administration haspressured numerous countries to reject the convention establishing an InternationalCriminal Court. And as we discuss at length in Chapter 10, theUnited States has gone to considerable lengths to convince Iran to give upits own nuclear ambitions. Putting pressure on Israel, the Palestinians, andthe relevant Arab states in order to reach a final peace arrangement wouldhardly be inconsistent with America's conduct on other issues.

The United States has enormous potential leverage at its disposal fordealing with Israel and the Palestinians. It could threaten to cut off all economicand diplomatic support for Israel. If that were not enough, it wouldhave little difficulty lining up international support to isolate Israel, muchthe way South Africa was singled out and shunned at the end of the last century.Regarding the Palestinians, the United States could hold out the promiseof fulfilling their dream of a viable state in the Occupied Territoriescoupled with massive long-term economic aid. In return, the Palestinianswould have to end all terrorism against Israel. Given the political divisionswithin Israel and the often dysfunctional Palestinian leadership, as well asthe presence of violent rejectionists on both sides, achieving a final settlementwould not be easy. But doing nothing, or backing Israel so

consistently,has not made things better. On the contrary, this policy has almost certainlymade things worse for Palestinians and Israelis alike and continues to erodeAmerica's reputation in the world and make it more difficult to deal with urgentissues like Iran and Iraq.

It might be argued that this analysis is unrealistic given Israel's generallyfavorable image in the eyes of many Americans. In this view, the real reasonBush has backed Israel against the Palestinians is that U.S. public opinionstrongly favors Israel. The president, in short, is just responding to the willof the people. We have seen this claim before—it is the heart of the moralrationale for the special relationship between the United States and Israel.Yet this interpretation ignores the evidence that the American people wouldbe willing to put pressure on Israel if it were part of a larger peace deal.AlthoughU.S. surveys show greater sympathy for Israel than for the Palestinians,they also reveal considerable support for a more evenhanded policy. Forexample, most Americans were generally supportive of Bush's efforts to betough on Israel in the spring of 2002. A Time/CNN poll taken on April

10-11 found that 60 percent of Americans felt that U.S. aid to Israel shouldbe cut off or reduced if Sharon refused to withdraw from the Palestinianareas he had recently occupied. Moreover, 75 percent of those surveyedthought that Powell should meet with Arafat when he visited Israel. RegardingSharon, only 35 percent found him trustworthy, while 35 percentthought he was a warmonger, 20 percent saw him as a terrorist, and 25 percentconsidered him an enemy of the United States.12 8

One year later, a May 2003 poll conducted by the University of Marylandreported that over 60 percent of Americans would be willing to withholdaid to Israel if it resisted U.S. pressure to settle the conflict. Thatnumber rose to 70 percent among "politically active" Americans. Indeed, 73percent said that the United States should not favor either side in the conflict.It is also worth noting that only 17 percent of respondents agreed withthe claim made by Bush and Sharon that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is"part of the war on terrorism." Instead, 54 percent viewed it "as a conflict betweentwo national groups fighting over the same piece of land." The samesurvey showed that although most Americans did not know much about theRoad Map, 55 percent had a "positive view" of it. When informed of its keyelements, support rose to 74 percent.12 9 Even a 2005 survey conducted bythe ADL found that 78 percent of Americans believe that their governmentshould favor neither Israel nor the Palestinians.13 0

Since September 11, the American people have been receptive to pressuringIsrael when they believed that doing so would be in the U.S. nationalinterest. President Bush has also recognized that getting the Palestinians aviable state of their own was the only way to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,and his administration has tried to advance that goal on several occasions.But neither public opinion nor presidential initiatives mattered verymuch, because the lobby has made it nearly impossible for the UnitedStates to put pressure on Israel to negotiate a settlement.

As we have seen, Bush formally endorsed the idea of a Palestinian statein the fall of 2001. In the spring of 2002, he called for Israel to withdraw itsforces from several Palestinian areas in the West Bank and sent Secretary ofState Colin Powell to the region to jump-start the peace process. That samesummer, Bush launched the Road Map initiative, which was supposed to providea clear timetable leading to an independent and democratic Palestinianstate. The following year, Bush traveled to the Middle East to promote theRoad Map. After the collapse in 2006 of the Israeli plan to impose a unilateralsettlement on the Palestinians, the administration—with Secretary of StateCondoleezza Rice in the lead—made a renewed effort to end the conflict.

In each case, the lobby moved quickly and effectively to neutralize theBush administration's efforts. Groups in the lobby employed a variety of tactics:open letters, congressional resolutions, op-eds and press releases, anddirect meetings between administration officials and the leaders of influentialJewish and evangelical groups.

Sympathetic government officials, suchas the NSC's Elliott Abrams, helped in these efforts, at times meeting withIsraeli officials to thwart ongoing initiatives. Instead of using U.S. leverageto move toward peace (for example, by linking U.S. support to Israel's cooperationon the Road Map), Bush ended up instead backing Sharon's (andnow Olmert's) chosen policy at every turn. As former national security adviserBrent Scowcroft declared in October 2004, Sharon had PresidentBush "wrapped around his little finger."131

Israel's ability to defy the United States—and even to get Washington tofollow its preferred approach to dealing with the Palestinians—offers a classicillustration of interest group politics at work. Although public opinionpolls show that the American people would support compelling Israel to offerthe Palestinians a fair settlement, groups in the lobby—and especiallyits more hard-line elements—care more about this issue than the averageAmerican does. As a result, groups like AIPAC and the leaders of organizationslike the Conference of Presidents can put disproportionate pressureon elected officials and their policy preferences are more likely to win out,even if they are bad for the United States as a whole and unintentionallyharmful for Israel as well.

Maintaining U.S. support for Israel's policies against the Palestinians is acore goal of many groups in the lobby, but their objectives are not limited tothat goal. They also want America to help Israel remain the dominant regionalpower. The Israeli government and pro-Israel groups in the UnitedStates have worked together to shape the Bush administration's policytoward Iraq, Syria, and Iran, as well as its grand scheme for reordering theMiddle East. Let us now consider how the lobby and Israel influenced

America's decision to invade Iraq in March 2003 in the hope that this boldstroke would lead to the democratization of the entire region.

8

IRAQ AND DREAMS OF TRANSFORMING THE MIDDLE EAST

Why did the United States invade Iraq? In The Assassins' Gate: America inIraq, George Packer declares that "it still isn't possible to be sure, and thisremains the most remarkable thing about the Iraq war." He quotes RichardHaass, the director of policy planning in the State Department during Bush'sfirst term and now president of the Council on Foreign Relations, sayingthat he would "go to his grave not knowing the answer."1

In one sense, their uncertainty is understandable, because the decisionto overthrow Saddam Hussein even now seems difficult to fathom. He wasclearly a brutal tyrant with worrisome ambitions—including a desire to obtainWMD—but his own incompetence had put these dangerous objectivesout of reach. His army had been routed in the 1991 Gulf War and furtherweakened by a decade of UN sanctions. As a result, Iraq's military power,never impressive except on paper, was a pushover by 2003. Intrusive UN inspectionshad eliminated Iraq's nuclear program and eventually led Saddamto destroy his biological and chemical weapons stockpiles as well. Therewere no convincing links between Saddam and Osama bin Laden (who werein fact hostile to each other), and bin Laden and his associates were inAfghanistan or Pakistan, not Iraq. Yet in the aftermath of 9/11, when onewould have expected the United States to be focusing laserlike on al Qaeda,the Bush administration chose to invade a deteriorating country that hadnothing to do with the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagonand was already effectively contained. From this perspective, it is a deeplypuzzling decision.

From another angle, however, the decision is not that hard to understand.The United States was the world's most powerful country, and there

was never any doubt about its ability to oust Saddam if it so chose. TheUnited States had not only won the long Cold War, it had also enjoyed a remarkablerun of military successes after 1989:

defeating Iraq handily in1991, halting the Balkan bloodletting in 1995, and beating Serbia in 1999.The rapid ouster of the Taliban in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 reinforcedan image of military invincibility and made it harder for skeptics onIraq to convince others that going to war was unnecessary and unwise. Americanswere also shocked and alarmed by 9/11, and many of their leaders wereconvinced that the United States could not allow even remote dangers togrow in an era when terrorists might acquire WMD. Those who favored warbelieved that toppling Saddam would convince other rogue states that Americawas simply too powerful to oppose and compel these regimes to conformto U.S. wishes instead. In the period before the war, in short, the UnitedStates was simultaneously powerful, confident of its military prowess, anddeeply worried about its own security—a dangerous combination.2

These various elements form the strategic context in which the decisionfor war was made and help us understand some of the underlying forces thatfacilitated that choice. But there was another variable in the equation, andthe war would almost certainly not have occurred had it been absent. Thatelement was the Israel lobby, and especially a group of neoconservative policymakers and pundits who had been pushing the United States to attackIraq since well before 9/11. The prowar faction believed that removing Saddamwould improve America's and Israel's strategic position and launch aprocess of regional transformation that would benefit the United States andIsrael alike. Israeli officials and former Israeli leaders supported these efforts,because they were eager to see the United States topple one of theirmain regional adversaries—and the man who had launched Scud missiles at

Israel in 1991.

Pressure from Israel and the lobby was not the only factor behind theBush administration's decision to attack Iraq in March 2003, but it was acritical element. Many Americans believe that this was a "war for oil" (or forcorporations like Halliburton), but there is little direct evidence to supportthis claim and considerable evidence that casts doubt on it. Other observersblame political advisers such as the Republican strategist Karl Rove and suggestthat the war was part of a Machiavellian scheme to keep the country ona war footing and thus ensure a lengthy period of Republican control. Thisview has a certain partisan appeal, but it too lacks supporting evidence andcannot explain why so many prominent Democrats supported going to war.Another interpretation views the war as the first step in a bold effort to

transform the Middle East by spreading democracy. This view is correct, butas we will see, this remarkably ambitious scheme was inextricably linked toconcerns about Israel's security.

In contrast to these alternative explanations, we argue that the war wasmotivated at least in good part by a desire to make Israel more secure. Thiswas a controversial claim before the war started, but it is even more controversialnow that Iraq has turned into a strategic disaster. To be clear, the individualsand groups that pushed for war believed it would benefit bothIsrael and the United States, and they certainly did not anticipate the debaclethat ultimately occurred. Regardless, a proper account of the lobby's rolein encouraging the war is ultimately a question of evidence, and there isconsiderable evidence that Israel and pro-Israel groups—especially theneoconservatives—played important roles in the decision to invade.

Before examining the evidence, however, it is worth noting that a numberof knowledgeable and well-respected individuals have said openly that thewar was linked with Israel's security. Philip Zelikow, a member of the president'sForeign Intelligence Advisory Board (2001-03), executive director ofthe 9/11 Commission, and counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice(2005-06), told a University of Virginia audience on September 10, 2002,that Saddam was not a direct threat to the United States. "The real threat,"he argued, is "the threat against Israel." He went on to say, "And this is thethreat that dare not speak its name, because the Europeans don't caredeeply about that threat . . . And the American government doesn't want

tolean too hard on it rhetorically, because it is not a popular sell."3

General Wesley Clark, the retired NATO commander and former presidentialcandidate, said in August 2002 that "those who favor this attack nowwill tell you candidly, and privately, that it is probably true that Saddam Husseinis no threat to the United States. But they are afraid that at some pointhe might decide if he had a nuclear weapon to use it against Israel."4 InJanuary 2003, a German journalist asked Ruth Wedgwood, a prominentneoconservative academic and a member of the influential Defense PolicyBoard (chaired by Richard Perle), why the journalist should support the war.I could "be impolite," Wedgwood said, "and remind Germany of its specialrelationship with Israel. Saddam presents an existential threat to Israel. Thatis simply true." Wedgwood did not justify the war by saying that Iraq poseda direct threat to Germany or the United States.5

A few weeks before the United States invaded Iraq, the journalist JoeKlein wrote in Time magazine, "A stronger Israel is very much embedded inthe rationale for war with Iraq. It is a part of the argument that dare not

speak its name, a fantasy quietly cherished by the neo-conservative factionin the Bush Administration and by many leaders of the American Jewishcommunity."6 Former Senator Ernest Hollings made a similar argument inMay 2004. After noting that Iraq was not a direct threat to the UnitedStates, he asked why we invaded that country.7 "The answer," which he said"everyone knows," is "because we want to secure our friend Israel." A numberof Jewish groups promptly labeled Hollings an anti-Semite, with the

ADL calling his comments "reminiscent of age-old, anti-Semitic canardsabout a Jewish conspiracy to control and manipulate government."8 Hollingsadamantly rejected the charge, noting that he had long been a staunch supporterof Israel and that he was simply stating the obvious, not making anuntruthful claim. He demanded that his critics "apologize to me for talkingabout anti-Semitism."9

A handful of other public figures—Patrick Buchanan, Arnaud de Borchgrave,Maureen Dowd, Géorgie Anne Geyer, Gary Hart, Chris Matthews,Congressman James P. Moran (D-VA), Robert Novak, Tim Russert, andGeneral Anthony Zinni—either said or strongly hinted that pro-Israel hardlinersin the United States were the principal movers behind the Iraq war.1 0In Novak's case, he referred to the war well before it happened as "Sharon'swar" and continues to do so today. "I am convinced," he said in April 2007,"that Israel made a large contribution to the decision to embark on this war.I know that on the eve of the war, Sharon said, in a closed conversation withsenators, that if they could succeed in getting rid of Saddam Hussein, itwould solve Israel's security problems."1 1

The connection between Israel and the Iraq war was widely recognizedlong before the fighting started. When the prospect of an American invasionwas beginning to dominate the headlines in the fall of 2002, the journalistMichael Kinsley wrote that "the lack of public discussion about the role ofIsrael .. . is the proverbial elephant in the room: Everybody sees it, no onementions it."1 2 The reason for this reluctance, he observed, was fear of beinglabeled an anti-Semite. Two weeks before the war started, NathanGuttman reported in Haaretz that "the voices linking Israel to the war aregetting louder and louder. It is claimed the desire to help Israel is the majorreason for President George Bush sending American soldiers to a superfluouswar in the Gulf. And the voices come from all directions."13

A few days later, Bill Keller, who is now the executive editor of the NewYork Times, wrote, "The idea that this war is about Israel is persistent andmore widely held than you may think."14 Finally, in May 2005, two years afterthe war began, Barry Jacobs of the American Jewish Committee acknowl

edged that the belief that Israel and the neoconservatives were responsiblefor getting the United States to invade Iraq was "pervasive" in the U.S.intelligencecommunity.15

Some will surely argue that anyone who suggests that concerns aboutIsrael's security had a significant influence on the Bush administration'sdecision to invade Iraq is either an anti-Semite or a self-hating Jew. Suchcharges are both predictable and false. As we will now show, there is abundantevidence that Israel and the lobby played crucial roles in making thatwar happen. This is not to assert that either Israel or the lobby "controls"

U.S. foreign policy; it is simply to say that they successfully pressed for aparticular set of policies and were able, in a particular context, to achievetheir objective. Had the circumstances been different, they would not havebeen able to get the United States to go to war. But without their efforts,America would probably not be in Iraq today.ISRAEL AND THE IRAQ WAR

Israel has always considered Iraq an enemy, but it became especially concernedabout Iraq in the mid-1970s, when France agreed to provide Saddamwith a nuclear reactor. For good reason, Israel worried that Iraq might use thereactor as a stepping-stone to building nuclear weapons. Responding to thethreat, in 1981, the Israelis bombed the Osirak reactor before it became operational.1 6 Despite this setback, Iraq continued working on its nuclear programin dispersed and secret locations. This situation helps explain Israel'senthusiastic support for the first Gulf War in 1991 ; its main concern was notto push Iraqi troops out of Kuwait but to topple Saddam and especially tomake sure that Iraq's nuclear program was dismantled.17 Although the UnitedStates did not remove Saddam from power, the UN inspections regime imposedon Baghdad after the war reduced—but did not eliminate—Israel's

concerns. In fact, Haaretz reported on February 26, 2001, that "Sharon believesthat Iraq poses more of a threat to regional stability than Iran, due tothe errant, irresponsible behavior of Saddam Hussein's regime."1 8

Sharon's comments notwithstanding, by early 2002, when it was becomingincreasingly apparent that the Bush administration was thinking seriouslyabout another war against Iraq, some Israeli leaders told U.S. officialsthat they thought Iran was a greater threat.1 9 They were not opposed to topplingSaddam, however, and Israel's leaders, who are rarely reticent when itcomes to giving their American counterparts advice, never tried to convince

the Bush administration not to go to war against Iraq. Nor did the Israeligovernment ever try to mobilize its supporters in the United States to lobbyagainst the invasion. On the contrary, Israeli leaders were worried only thatthe United States might lose sight of the Iranian threat in its pursuit of Saddam.Once they realized that the Bush administration was countenancing abolder scheme, one that called for winning quickly in Iraq and then dealingwith Iran and Syria, they began to push vigorously for an American invasion.

In short, Israel did not initiate the campaign for war against Iraq. As willbecome clear, it was the neoconservatives in the United States who conceivedthat idea and were principally responsible for pushing it forward inthe wake of September 11. But Israel did join forces with the neoconservativesto help sell the war to the Bush administration and the Americanpeople, well before the president had made the final decision to invade. Indeed,Israeli leaders worried constantly in the months before the war thatPresident Bush might decide not to go to war after all, and they did whatthey could to ensure Bush did not get cold feet.

The Israelis began their efforts in the spring of 2002, a few months beforethe Bush administration launched its own campaign to sell the Iraq warto the American public. Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahucame to Washington in mid-April and met with U.S. senators and the editorsof the Washington Post, among others, to warn them that Saddam wasdeveloping nuclear weapons that could be delivered against the Americanhomeland in suitcases or satchels.2 0 A few weeks later, Ra'anan Gissen,Sharon's spokesman, told a Cleveland reporter that "if Saddam Hussein isnot stopped now, five years from now, six years from now, we will have todeal with an Iraq that is

armed with nuclear weapons, with an Iraq that hasdelivery systems for weapons of mass destruction."21

In mid-May, Shimon Peres, the former Israeli prime minister now servingas foreign minister, appeared on CNN, where he said that "Saddam Husseinis as dangerous as bin Laden," and the United States "cannot sit and wait"while he builds a nuclear arsenal. Instead, Peres insisted, it was time to topplethe Iraqi leader.2 2 A month later, Ehud Barak, another former Israeliprime minister, wrote an op-ed in the Washington Post recommending thatthe Bush administration "should, first of all, focus on Iraq and the removal ofSaddam Hussein. Once he is gone there will be a different Arab world."23

On August 12, 2002, Sharon told the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committeeof the Knesset that Iraq "is the greatest danger facing Israel."2 4 Then,on August 16, ten days before Vice President Cheney kicked off the cam

paign for war with a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention inNashville, Tennessee, several newspapers and television and radio networks(including Haaretz, the Washington Post, CNN, and CBS News) reportedthat Israel was urging the United States not to delay an attack on Iraq.Sharon told the Bush administration that postponing the operation "will notcreate a more convenient environment for action in the future." Putting offan attack, Ra'anan Gissen said, would "only give him (Saddam) more of anopportunity to accelerate his program of weapons of mass destruction." ForeignMinister Peres told CNN that "the problem today is not if, but when."Postponing an attack would be a grave mistake, he said, because Saddam

would be better armed down the road. Deputy Defense Minister WeizmanShiry offered a similar view, warning, "If the Americans do not do this now,it will be harder to do it in the future. In a year or two, Saddam Hussein willbe further along in developing weapons of mass destruction." Perhaps CBSbest captured what was going on in the headline for its story: "Israel to US:Don't Delay Iraq Attack."2 5

Peres and Sharon both made sure to emphasize that they "did not want tobe seen as urging the United States to act and that America should act accordingto its own judgment."2 6 Israeli leaders—and many of their supportersin the United States—were well aware that some American commentators,most notably Patrick Buchanan, had argued that the driving force behind the1991 Gulf War was "the Israeli Defense Ministry and its amen corner in theUnited States."27 Denying any responsibility made good political sense, butthere is no question—based on their own public comments—that by August2002 Israel's leaders saw Saddam as a threat to the Jewish state and wereencouragingthe Bush administration to launch a war to remove him from power.

News stories around the same time also reported that "Israeli intelligenceofficials have gathered evidence that Iraq is speeding up efforts toproduce biological and chemical weapons."28 Peres told CNN that "we thinkand know that he [Saddam] is on his way to acquiring a nuclear option."2 9Haaretz reported that Saddam had given an "order .. . to Iraq's Atomic EnergyCommission last week to speed up its work."3 0 Israel was feeding thesealarming reports about Iraq's WM D programs to Washington at a timewhen, by Sharon's own reckoning, "strategic coordination between Israeland the U.S. has reached unprecedented dimensions."31 Following the invasionand the revelation that there were no WM D in Iraq, the Senate IntelligenceCommittee and the Israeli Knesset released separate reports revealingthat much of the intelligence Israel gave to the Bush administration was

false. As one retired Israeli general put it, "Israeli intelligence was a fullpartnerto the picture presented by American and British intelligence regardingIraq's non-conventional capabilities."3 2

Of course, Israel is hardly the first state to push another country to takea costly or risky action on its behalf. States facing external dangers often tryto pass the buck to others, and the United States has a rich tradition of similarbehavior itself.3 3 It backed Saddam Hussein

in the 1980s in order tohelp contain the threat from revolutionary Iran, and it armed and backed theAfghan mujahideen following the Soviet invasion of that country in 1979.The United States did not send its own troops to fight these wars; it merelydid what it could to help others—who had their own reasons for fighting—do the heavy lifting.

Given their understandable desire to have the United States eliminate aregional rival, it is not surprising that Israeli leaders were distressed whenPresident Bush decided to seek UN Security Council authorization for warin September 2002, and even more worried when Saddam agreed to let UNinspectors back into Iraq. These developments troubled Israel's leaders becausethey seemed to reduce the likelihood of war. Foreign Minister Perestold reporters, "The campaign against Saddam Hussein is a must. Inspectionsand inspectors are good for decent people, but dishonest people canovercome easily inspections and inspectors."3 4 On a visit to Moscow in lateSeptember, Sharon made it clear to Russian President Vladimir Putin, whowas leading the charge for new inspections, that it was too late for them tobe effective.3 5 Peres became so frustrated with the UN process in the followingmonths that in mid-February 2003 he lashed out at France by questioningits status as a permanent member of the Security Council.3 6

Israel's adamant opposition to inspections put it in a lonely and awkwardposition, as Marc Perelman made clear in an article in the Forward in mid-September 2002: "Saddam Hussein's surprise acceptance of unconditional'United Nations weapons inspections put Israel on the hot seat this week,forcing it into the open as the only nation actively supporting the Bushadministration's

goal of Iraqi regime change."3 7

Pressing ahead in the face of UN diplomacy, Israelis portrayed Saddamin the direst terms, often comparing him to Adolf Hitler. If the West did notstand up to Iraq, they claimed, it would be making the same mistake it madewith Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Shlomo Avineri, a prominent Israelischolar, wrote in the Los Angeles Times that "all who condemn the 1930s appeasementof Germany should reflect long and hard on whether a failure toact today against Iraq will one day be viewed the same way."38 The implica

tion was unmistakable: anyone who opposed invading Iraq—or, as we haveseen, pushed Israel to negotiate with the Palestinians—was an appeaser,just like Neville Chamberlain, and bound to be regarded as such by futuregenerations. The Jerusalem Post was especially hawkish, frequently runningeditorials and op-eds favoring the war and rarely running pieces arguingagainst it.3 9 Indeed, it went so far as to editorialize that "ousting Saddam isthe linchpin of the war on terrorism, without which it is impossible to begin

in earnest,)et alone win. "40

Other Israeli public figures echoed Peres and Sharon's advocacy for warinstead of diplomatic wrangling. Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak wrotea New York Times op-ed in early September 2002 claiming that "SaddamHussein's nuclear-weapons program provides the urgent need for his removal."He went on to warn that "the greatest risk now lies in inaction."4 1His predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu, published a similar piece a fewweeks later in the Wall Street Journal titled "The Case for Toppling Saddam."Netanyahu declared, "Today nothing less than dismantling his regime willdo," adding that "I believe I speak for the overwhelming majority of Israelisin supporting a pre-emptive strike against Saddam's regime," which heclaimed was "feverishly trying to acquire nuclear weapons."4 2

Netanyahu's influence, of course, extended well beyond writing op-edsand appearing on television. Having gone to high school, college, and graduateschool in the United States, he speaks fluent English and is not only familiarwith how the American political system works but operates skillfully in it.He has close ties with neoconservatives inside and outside of the Bushadministration,and he has extensive contacts on Capitol Hill, where he has eitherspoken or testified on numerous occasions.4 3 Barak is also well connectedwith

American policy makers, politicians, security experts, and pundits.

The Israeli government's war fervor did not diminish in the months beforethe fighting started. Haaretz, for example, ran a story on February 17, 2003,titled "Enthusiastic IDF Awaits War in Iraq," which said that Israel's "militaryand political leadership yearns for war in Iraq." Ten days later James Bennetwrote a story in the New York Times with the headline "Israel Says War onIraq Would Benefit the Region." The Forward published a piece on March 7,2003, titled "Jerusalem Frets as U.S. Battles Iraq War Delays," which madeit clear that Israel's leaders were hoping for war sooner rather than later.4 4

Given all this activity, it is unsurprising that Bill Clinton recounted in2006 that "every Israeli politician I knew" believed that Saddam Husseinwas so great a threat that he should be removed even if he did not haveWMD. 4 5 Nor was the desire for war confined to Israel's leaders. Apart from

Kuwait, which Saddam conquered in 1990, Israel was the only country outsideof the United States where a majority of politicians and the public enthusiasticallyfavored war. A poll taken in early 2002 found that 58 percentof Israeli Jews believed that "Israel should encourage the United States toattack Iraq."4 6 Another poll taken a year later in February 2003 found that

77.5 percent of Israeli Jews wanted the United States to invade Iraq.4 7 Evenin Tony Blair's Britain, a poll taken just before the war revealed that 51 percent

of the respondents opposed it, while only 39 percent supported it.4 8This rather unusual situation prompted Gideon Levy of Haaretz to ask,"Why is it that in England 50,000 people have demonstrated against the warin Iraq, whereas in Israel no one has? Why is it that in Israel there is no publicdebate about whether the war is necessary?" He went on to say, "Israel isthe only country in the West whose leaders support the war unreservedlyand where no alternative opinion is voiced."4 9

Israel's enthusiasm for war eventually led some of its allies in America totell Israeli officials to damp down their hawkish rhetoric, lest the war looklike it was being fought for Israel.5 0 In the fall of 2002, for example, a groupof American political consultants known as the Israel Project circulated asix-page memorandum to key Israelis and pro-Israel leaders in the UnitedStates. The memo was titled "Talking about Iraq" and was intended as aguide for public statements about the war. "If your goal is regime change,you must be much more careful with your language because of the potentialbacklash. You do not want Americans to believe that the war on Iraq is beingwaged to protect Israel rather than to protect America."5 1

Reflecting that same concern on the eve of the war, Sharon, according toseveral reports, told Israeli diplomats and politicians to keep quiet about apossible war in Iraq and certainly not to say anything that made it appearthat Israel was pushing the Bush administration to topple Saddam. The Israelileader was worried by the growing perception that Israel was advocatinga U.S. invasion of Iraq. In fact, Israel was; it just did not want its positionto be widely known.5 2

THE LOBBY AND THE IRAQ WAR

The driving force behind the Iraq war was a small band of neoconservativeswho had long favored the energetic use of American power to reshape criticalareas of the world. They had advocated toppling Saddam since the mid1990sand believed this step would benefit the United States and Israel

alike.5 3 This group included prominent officials in the Bush administrationsuch as Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith, the number two and three civiliansin the Pentagon; Richard Perle, Kenneth Adelman, and James Woolsey,members of the influential Defense Policy Board; Scooter Libby, the vicepresident's chief of staff; John

Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms controland international security, and his special assistant, David Wurmser;and Elliott Abrams, who is in charge of Middle East policy at the NationalSecurity Council. It also included a handful of well-known journalists likeRobert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, and William Safire.

The appointment of a number of neoconservatives to top policy positionswas seen by Israelis and their American allies as a very positive development.When Wolfowitz was selected to be deputy defense secretary in January2001, the Jerusalem Post reported that "the Jewish and pro-Israelcommunities are jumping with joy."5 4 In the spring of 2002, the Forwardpointed out that Wolfowitz is "known as the most hawkishly pro-Israel voicein the Administration," and it selected him later in 2002 as the first amongfifty notables who "have consciously pursued Jewish activism."5 5 At aboutthe same time, JINSA gave him its Henry M. Jackson Distinguished ServiceAward for promoting a strong partnership between Israel and the UnitedStates, and the Jerusalem Post, describing Wolfowitz as "devoutly pro-Israel,"named him its "Man of the Year" in 2003. 5 6

Feith's role in shaping the case for war should also be understood in thecontext of his long-standing commitment to Israel and his prior associationwith hard-line groups there. Feith has close ties with key organizations inthe lobby like the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs and theZionist Organization of America. He wrote articles in the 1990s supportingthe settlements and arguing that Israel should retain the Occupied Territories.5 7 More important, as we noted in Chapter 4, Feith was a coauthor,along with Perle and Wurmser, of the famous "Clean Break" report in June1996.5 8 Written under the auspices of a right-wing Israeli think tank for incomingIsraeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the report recommended,among other things, that Netanyahu "focus on removing Saddam

Hussein from power in Iraq—an important Israeli strategic objective in itsown right." It also called for Israel to take steps to reorder the entire MiddleEast. Netanyahu did not implement their advice, but Feith, Perle, andWurmser were soon advocating that the Bush administration pursue thosesame goals. This situation prompted the Haaretz columnist Akiva Eldar towarn that Feith and Perle "are walking a fine line between their loyalty toAmerican governments . . . and Israeli interests."5 9 As George Packer notes

in The Assassins' Gate, "For Feith and Wurmser, the security of Israel wasprobably the prime mover" behind their support for the war.6 0

John Bolton and Scooter Libby were staunch supporters of Israel as well.As America's ambassador to the UN, Bolton consistently and enthusiasticallydefended Israel's interests. So much so, in fact, that in May 2006, theIsraeli ambassador to the UN jokingly described Bolton as "a secret memberof Israel's own team at the United Nations." He went on to say that "the secretis out. We really are not just five diplomats. We are at least six includingJohn Bolton."6 1 When Bolton's controversial reappointment to that positionbecame an issue later in 2006, pro-Israel groups weighed in on Bolton'sside.6 2 Regarding Libby, the Forward reported when he left the White Housein the fall of 2005 that "Israeli officials liked Libby. They described him asan important contact who was accessible, genuinely interested in Israelrelatedissues and very sympathetic to their cause."6 3

Neoconservatives outside the Bush administration are every bit as devotedto Israel as are their compatriots in the government. Consider the commentsthat the columnist Charles Krauthammer made in Jerusalem on June 10, 2002,after receiving the Guardian of Zion Award from Bar-Ilan University.64 Thetheme of his talk was characterizing Israel's participation in the Oslo peaceprocess as an example of misguided Jewish messianism. In his remarks,Krauthammer explicitly identified himself with Israel—indeed, as Israeli. Atone point he observed that "thirty-five years ago today the Six-Day war ended.It seemed like a new era . . . Jerusalem had been re-united, the Temple Mountwas ours, Israel." He went on to say, "My thesis tonight is that many of ourtroublestoday, as a people and as a Jewish state, are rooted precisely in this newMessianic enthusiasm." Krauthammer, like virtually all other

neoconservativepundits, was a relentless advocate for war right up until the invasion.

Although many of the prominent neoconservatives were Jewish Americanswith strong attachments to Israel, some of the leading members of theprowar party were not. In addition to John Bolton, the signatories of theopen letters to Presidents Bush and Clinton sponsored by the Project forthe New American Century included gentiles such as former CIA directorJames Woolsey and former Secretary of Education William Bennett.Woolsey was particularly obsessed with proving that Saddam was responsiblefor 9/11, and he devoted considerable effort trying to confirm an early reportthat Mohammed Atta, one of the 9/11 hijackers, had met with an Iraqiintelligence agent in Prague. The story was implausible and is widely believedto be false, but Woolsey and Vice President Dick Cheney both invokedit to bolster the case for war.6 5

The neoconservatives were not the only part of the lobby pushing for warwith Iraq. Key leaders of the major pro-Israel organizations lent their voicesto the campaign for war. Of course, many of the neoconservatives themselveshad close ties to these organizations. In mid-September 2002, whenthe selling of the war was just getting under way, Michelle Goldberg wrotein Salon that "mainstream Jewish groups and leaders are now among thestrongest supporters of an American invasion of Baghdad."6 6 This samepoint was made in a Forward editorial written well after the fall of Baghdad:"As President Bush attempted to sell the . . . war in Iraq, America's most importantJewish organizations rallied as one to his defense. In statement afterstatement community leaders stressed the need to rid the world of SaddamHussein and his weapons of mass destruction. Some groups went even further,arguing that the removal of the Iraqi leader would represent a significant

step toward bringing peace to the Middle East and winning America'swar on terrorism." The editorial goes on to say that "concern for Israel'ssafety rightfully factored into the deliberations of the main Jewish groups."67

Although there was hardly any opposition to the war among the majorJewish organizations, there was disagreement about how vocal they shouldbe in backing it. The main concern was the fear that too open support for aninvasion would make it look like the war was being fought for Israel's sake.6 8Nonetheless, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the Conference ofPresidents of Major American Jewish Organizations voted to support the useof force against Iraq ("as a last resort") in the fall of 2002, and some prominentfigures in the lobby went further.69 Among the most outspoken proponentsof the invasion was Mortimer Zuckerman, the chairman of theConference of Presidents, who made frequent public statements promotingthe war. In late August 2002, he wrote in U.S. News & World Report, wherehe is editor in chief, "Those who predict dire results if we try to unseat Saddamsimply refuse to understand—as President Bush manifestly does—thatif we opt to live with a nightmare, it will only get worse. Much worse. Thebest medicine here, in other words, is preventive medicine."7 0

Jack Rosen, the president of the American Jewish Congress, and RabbiDavid Saperstein, the head of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism,were also enthusiastic war hawks. Saperstein, who is known for his liberalpolitical views and whom the Washington Post called "the quintessential religiouslobbyist on Capitol Hill," said in September 2002 that "the JewishCommunity would want to see a forceful resolution to the threat that SaddamHussein poses."7 1 Jewish Week, an influential newspaper in the greaterNew York area, backed the war as well. Gary Rosenblatt, its editor and pub

lisher, wrote an editorial in mid-December 2002 in which he emphasizedthat "Washington's imminent war on Saddam Hussein is not only an opportunityto rid the world of a dangerous tyrant who presents a particularly horrificthreat to Israel." He went on to say that "when a despot announces hisevil intentions, believe him. That's one of the lessons we should havelearned from Hitler and the Holocaust. What's more, the Torah instructsthat when your enemy seeks to kill you, kill him first. Self-defense is notpermitted;it is commanded."7 2 Organizations like AIPAC and the ADL alsosupported the war, but

they did so with minimum fanfare.

Now that the war has turned into a disaster, supporters of Israel sometimesargue that AIPAC, which is the most visible group in the lobby, did notback the invasion.73 But this claim fails the common sense test, as AIPACusually supports what Israel wants, and Israel certainly wanted the UnitedStates to invade Iraq. Nathan Guttman made this very connection in his reportingon AIPAC's annual conference in the spring of 2003, shortly afterthe war started: "AIPAC is wont to support whatever is good for Israel, andso long as Israel supports the war, so too do the thousands of AIPAC lobbyistswho convened in the American capital."7 4 AIPAC executive directorHoward Kohr's statement to the New York Sun in January 2003 is even morerevealing, as he acknowledged that "quietly lobbying Congress to approvethe use of force in Iraq" was one of "AIPAC's successes over the past year."75And in a lengthy New Yorker profile of Steven J. Rosen, who was AIPAC'spolicy director during the run-up to the Iraq war, Jeffrey Goldberg reportedthat "AIPAC lobbied Congress in favor of the Iraq war."76

AIPAC has remained a firm supporter of the U.S. presence in Iraq. In thefall of 2003, when the Bush administration was having difficulty convincingSenate Democrats to allocate more money for the war, Senate Republicansasked AIPAC to lobby their Democratic colleagues to support the funding request.AIPAC representatives talked to some Democratic senators and themoney was approved.77 When Bush gave a speech at AIPAC in May 2004 inwhich he defended his Iraq policy, he received twenty-three standing ovations.7 8 At AIPAC's 2007 conference, by which time American public opinionon the war had soured, Vice President Cheney made the case for staying thecourse in Iraq. According to David Horovitz of the Jerusalem Post, he received"considerable applause."79 And John Boehner, the House minority leader, received

a standing ovation when he said, "Who does not believe that failure inIraq is not a direct threat to the state of Israel? The consequences of failure inIraq are so ominous for the United States that you can't even begin to think

about it." By contrast, when Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi criticized theBush administration's "surge" strategy, many in the audience booed.8 0

AI PAC is not the only major group in the lobby to stick with Bush onIraq, or at least not come out against the war. As the Forward reported inMarch 2007, "Most Jewish organizations have refused to speak out againstthe war, and at times they displayed support for the administration."81 Thisbehavior is especially striking given the attitudes of most American Jewstoward the war itself. According to a 2007 Gallup Organization study basedon the results of thirteen polls taken since 2005, American Jews are significantlymore opposed to the Iraq war (77 percent) than the general Americanpublic (52 percent).8 2 With respect to Iraq, the larger and wealthier pro-Israel organizations are clearly out of step with the broader population ofAmerican Jews. A few Jewish organizations, such as the Tikkun Communityand Jewish Voice for Peace, opposed the war before it started and continueto do so today. But as noted in Chapter 4, these groups are neither as wellfunded nor as influential as organizations like AI PAC.

This gap between the political positions taken by key groups in the lobbyand the public attitudes of American Jews underscores an essential pointthat deserves special emphasis. Although prominent Israeli leaders, theneoconservatives, and many of the lobby's leaders were eager for the UnitedStates to invade Iraq, the broader American Jewish community was not.8 3 Infact, Samuel Freedman, a journalism professor at Columbia University, reportedjust after the war started that "a compilation of nationwide opinionpolls by the Pew Research Center shows that Jews are less supportive of theIraq war than the population at large, 52% to 62%."8 4 It would therefore bea cardinal error to attribute the war in Iraq to "Jewish influence," or to"blame the Jews" for the war. Rather, the war was due in large part to thelobby's influence, and especially its neoconservative wing. And the lobby, aswe have emphasized before, is not always representative of the larger communityfor which it often claims to speak.

SELLING THE WAR TO A SKEPTICAL AMERICA

The neoconservatives began their campaign to use military force to toppleSaddam well before Bush became president. They caused a stir in early1998 by organizing two letters to President Clinton calling for Saddam's removalfrom power. The first letter (January 26, 1998) was written under the

auspices of the Project for the New American Century and was signed byElliott Abrams, John Bolton, Robert Kagan, William Kristol, Richard Perle,Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz, among others. The second letter(February 19, 1998) was written under the auspices of the Committee forPeace and Security in the Gulf, the organization set up in 1990 by Perle,Ann Lewis (the former political director of the Democratic National Committee),and former Congressman Stephen J. Solarz (D-NY), to lobby for thefirst Gulf War. It was signed by the individuals mentioned above who signedthe first letter as well as Douglas Feith, Michael Ledeen, Bernard Lewis,Martin Peretz, and David Wurmser, just to name a few.8 5

In addition to these two high-profile letters, the neoconservatives andtheir allies in the lobby worked assiduously in 1998 to get Congress to passthe Iraq Liberation Act, which mandated that "it should be the policy of theUnited States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by SaddamHussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democraticgovernment to replace that regime." The neoconservatives were especiallyenthusiastic about this legislation not only because it sanctioned regimechange in Iraq, but also because it provided $97 million to fund groups committedto overthrowing Saddam.8 6 The main group they had in mind was theIraqi National Congress (INC), which was headed by their close associate,

Ahmed Chalabi. Perle, Wolfowitz, and Woolsey all lobbied hard on behalf ofthe legislation, as did JINSA.8 7 The act passed in the House by a vote of360-38 and by unanimous consent in the Senate. President Clinton thensigned it on October 31, 1998.

Clinton had little use for the Iraq Liberation Act, but he could not affordto veto it because he was facing midterm elections and impeachment.8 8Both he and his key advisers held Chalabi in low regard, and they did littleto implement the law. In fact, by the time Clinton left office, he had spenthardly any of the allotted money for opposition groups like the INC. Thepresident did pay lip service to the goal of ousting Saddam but did little tomake it happen, and he was certainly not considering using the U.S. militaryto drive the Iraqi dictator from power.8 9 In short, the neoconservatives wereunable to sell the idea of war against Iraq during the Clinton years, althoughthey did succeed in making regime change in Baghdad an official goal of the

U.S. government.Nor were they able to generate much enthusiasm for invading Iraq in theearly months of the Bush administration, even though a number of prominentneoconservatives held important positions in the new government and hadlost none of their enthusiasm for the enterprise. Richard Perle later said that

the advocates for toppling Saddam were losing the arguments inside theadministrationduring this early period.90 In fact, in March 2001, the New YorkTimes reported that "some Republicans" were complaining that Rumsfeld andWolfowitz "are failing to live up to their pre-election advocacy of stepping upefforts to overthrow President Hussein." At the same time, the WashingtonTimes ran an editorial titled "Have Hawks Become Doves?" The text of thateditorial was the January 26, 1998, PNAC letter to President Clinton.9 1

Given the publicity and the controversy surrounding two books publishedin 2004—Richard Clarke's Against All Enemies and Ron Suskind'sThe Price of Loyalty—one might think Bush and Cheney were bent on invadingIraq from the moment they assumed office in late January 2001. 9 2This interpretation, however, is wrong. They were certainly interested intoppling Saddam, but there is no evidence in the public record showing thatBush and Cheney were seriously contemplating war against Iraq before9/11. Bush did not advocate using force against Saddam during the 2000campaign, and he made it clear to Bob Woodward that he was not thinkingabout going to war

against Saddam before 9/11.9 3 Interestingly, his main foreignpolicy adviser in the campaign, Condoleezza Rice, wrote a prominentarticle in Foreign Affairs in early 2000 saying that the United States couldlive with a nuclear-armed Iraq. Rice declared that Saddam's "conventionalmilitary power" had been "severely weakened" and said "there need be nosense of panic" about his regime.9 4

Vice President Cheney maintained throughout the 1990s that conqueringIraq would be a major strategic blunder and he did not sign either of theletters calling for military action against Saddam that the neoconservativessent to President Clinton in early 1998.9 5 In the closing stages of the 2000campaign, he defended the 1991 decision not to go to Baghdad—in whichhe played a major role as secretary of defense—and said that "we want tomaintain our current posture vis-à-vis Iraq."9 6 There is no evidence to suggestthat either his thinking or that of the president had changed significantlyby early 2001. 9 7 Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, who had signed bothof the 1998 letters to President Clinton, appears to have been the only toptierBush administration official who may have favored war with Iraq upontaking office. None of the other groups that are sometimes blamed for thewar—such as oil companies, weapons manufacturers, Christian Zionists, ordefense contractors like Kellogg Brown & Root—were making noise aboutinvading Iraq at this time. In the beginning, the neoconservatives werelargely alone.

Yet as important as the neoconservatives were as the chief architects of

the war, they had been unable to persuade either Clinton or Bush to supportan invasion. They needed help to achieve their aim, and that help arrived on9/11. Specifically, the events of that tragic day led Bush and Cheney to reversecourse and become strong proponents of a preventive war to toppleSaddam. Robert Kagan put the point well in an interview with GeorgePacker: "September 11 is the turning point. Not anything else. This is notwhat Bush was on September 10." The neoconservatives—most notablyScooter Libby, Paul Wolfowitz, and the Princeton historian Bernard Lewis—played a critical role in persuading the president and vice president to favorwar. For them, 9/11 was the new context to sell their old view of Americanforeign policy. Possibly their greatest advantage was that they had, in Kagan'swords, "a ready-made approach to the world" at a time when both the presidentand the vice president were trying to make sense of an unprecedenteddisaster that seemed to call for radically new ways of thinking about internationalpolitics.9 8

Wolfowitz s behavior is especially revealing. At a key meeting with Bushat Camp David on September 15, 2001, Wolfowitz advocated attacking Iraqbefore Afghanistan, even though there was no evidence that Saddam was involvedin the attacks on the United States and bin Laden was known to bein Afghanistan.9 9 Wolfowitz was so insistent on conquering Iraq that fivedays later Cheney had to tell him to "stop agitating for targeting Saddam."10 0According to one Republican lawmaker, he "was like a parrot bringing [Iraq]up all the time. It was getting on the President's nerves."10 1 Bush rejectedWolfowitz's advice and chose to go after Afghanistan instead, but war withIraq was now regarded as a serious possibility and the president tasked U.S.military planners on November 21, 2001, with developing concrete plans foran invasion.10 2

Other neoconservatives were also hard at work within the corridors ofpower. Although we do not have the full story yet, there is considerable evidencethat scholars like Bernard Lewis and Fouad Ajami of Johns HopkinsUniversity played an important role in convincing Vice President Cheney tofavor war against Iraq.10 3 Indeed, Jacob Weisberg, the editor of Slate, describesLewis as "perhaps the most significant intellectual influence behindthe invasion of Iraq."10 4 Cheney's views were also heavily influenced byneoconservatives on his staff like Eric Edelman and John Hannah. Butsurely the most important influence on the vice president was his chief ofstaff, Scooter Libby, who was one of the most powerful individuals in theadministrationand whose views on Iraq were similar to those of his closefriend and longtime mentor, Paul Wolfowitz.10 5

Shortly after 9/11, the New

York Times reported that "some senior administration officials, led by Paul D.Wolfowitz . . . and I. Lewis Libby .. . are pressing for the earliest and broadestmilitary campaign against not only the Osama bin Laden network inAfghanistan, but also against other suspected terrorist bases in Iraq and inLebanon's Bekka region."10 6 Of course, the vice president's position helpedconvince President Bush by early 2002 that the United States would probablyhave to take Saddam out.10 7

Two other considerations show how profoundly important the neoconservativesinside the administration were for making the Iraq war happen.First, it is no exaggeration to say that they were not just determined; theywere obsessed with removing Saddam from power. As one senior administrationfigure put it in January 2003, "I do believe certain people have growntheological about this. It's almost a religion—that it will be the end of oursocietyif we don't take action now." A Washington Post journalist describedColin Powell returning from White House meetings during the run-up tothe Iraq war, "rolling his eyes" and saying, "Jeez, what a fixation about Iraq."Bob Woodward reports that Kenneth Adelman, a member of the DefensePolicy Board, "said he had worried to death as time went on and supportseemed to wane that there would be no war."10 8

Second, there was little enthusiasm for going to war against Iraq insidethe State Department, the intelligence community, or the uniformed military.

Although Secretary of State Powell ultimately supported the president'sdecision for war, he believed that it was a bad idea. The rank and file in hisdepartment shared his skepticism. There were two key outliers in the StateDepartment, however—John Bolton and David Wurmser, both prominentneoconservatives who had close ties to the White House. George Tenet, thehead of the CIA, also supported the White House on Iraq, but he was not aforceful advocate for war. Indeed, few individuals within the intelligencecommunity found the case for war convincing, which is why, as discussedbelow, the neoconservatives established their own intelligence units. Themilitary, especially the army, was filled with Iraq skeptics. General EricShinseki, the army chief of staff, was severely criticized by Wolfowitz (whodismissed Shinseki's estimate of the necessary troop levels required for theoccupation as "wildly off the mark") and later Rumsfeld for expressingdoubts about the war plan.10 9 The war hawks within the administration weremainly high-level civilians in the White House and the Pentagon, almost allof whom were neoconservatives.

They lost no time making the case that invading Iraq was essential to winningthe war on terrorism. Their efforts were partly aimed at keeping pressure

on Bush and partly intended to overcome opposition to the war inside andoutside of the government. On September 13, 2001, JINSA put out a pressrelease titled "This Goes Beyond Bin Laden," which maintained that "a longinvestigation to prove Osama Bin Laden s guilt with prosecutorial certainty isentirely unnecessary. He is guilty in word and deed. His history is the sourceof his culpability. The same holds true for Saddam Hussein. Our actions inthe past certainly were not forceful enough, and now we must seize the opportunityto alter this pattern of passivity."110 One week later, on September20, a group of prominent neoconservatives and their allies published an openletter to Bush, telling him that "even if evidence does not link Iraq directly tothe [9/11] attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and itssponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein frompower in Iraq."11 1 The letter also reminded Bush that "Israel has been and remainsAmerica s staunchest ally against international terrorism."

Little more than a week later, on September 28, Charles Krauthammerargued in the Washington Post that after we were done with Afghanistan,Syria should be next, followed by Iran and Iraq. "The war on terrorism," heargued, "will conclude in Baghdad," when we

finish off "the most dangerousterrorist regime in the world." Shortly thereafter, in the October 1 issue ofthe Weekly Standard, Robert Kagan and William Kristol called for regimechange in Iraq immediately after the Taliban was defeated.11 2 Other pundits,like Michael Barone in U.S. News &• World Report, were arguing evenbefore the dust had settled at the World Trade Center that "evidence is accumulatingthat Iraq aided or perhaps planned the attack."11 3

Over the next eighteen months, the neoconservatives waged an unrelentingpublic relations campaign to win support for invading Iraq. On April 3,2002, they released yet another open letter to Bush, which clearly linkedIsrael's security with a war to topple Saddam.11 4 The letter starts by commendingthe president for his "strong stance in support of the Israeli governmentas it engages in the present campaign to fight terrorism." It then arguesthat "the United States and Israel share a common enemy" and are "fightingthe same war." It urges Bush "to accelerate plans for removing Saddam Husseinfrom power," because otherwise "the damage our Israeli friends and wehave suffered until now may someday appear but a prelude to much greaterhorrors." The letter concludes with the following message: "Israel's fightagainst terrorism is our fight. Israel's victory is an important part of ourvictory.For reasons both moral and strategic, we need to stand with Israel in itsfight against terrorism."

The basic aim of the letter was to portray Arafat, bin Laden, and Saddam

as critical parts of a looming menace that threatened both Israel and the

United States. Not only did this depiction of a shared and growing dangerjustify close relations between America and Israel, it also justified theUnited States treating these three individuals as mortal enemies and backingIsrael's hard-line response to the Second Intifada. As noted in the previouschapter, relations between the Bush administration and the Sharongovernment were especially contentious in early April 2002, when the letterwas written. The signatories included Kenneth Adelman, William Bennett,Linda Chavez, Eliot Cohen, Midge Decter, Frank Gaffney, Reuel MarcGerecht, Donald Kagan, Robert Kagan, William Kristol, Joshua Muravchik,Martin Peretz, Richard Perle, Daniel Pipes, Norman Podhoretz, and JamesWoolsey, among others.

Other pro-Israel pundits, who are not normally thought of as neoconservatives,offered a steady drumbeat of prowar advocacy as well. The case for wargot a major boost with the publication in 2002 of Kenneth Pollack's ominouslytitled The Threatening Storm, which argued that Saddam was too risk acceptantand irrational to be deterred and concluded that preventive war was theonly realistic option. Because Pollack was a former Clinton administration officialwho had previously called ousting Saddam the "rollback fantasy," hisconversion to a prowar position seemed especially telling despite the book'stendentious treatment of evidence.11 5 Pollack moved from the Council onForeign Relations to Brookings's Saban Center for Middle East Policy duringthis period, where he and Saban Center director Martin Indyk produced anumber of op-eds and commentary in the months before the war, warning thatSaddam was undeterrable, that UN inspections were no solution, and thathowever regrettable, force would almost certainly be necessary.11 6

The neoconservatives and their allies deployed the same arguments andalmost the same language that the Israelis used to promote the war. Theneoconservatives made frequent reference to the 1930s and Munich, comparingSaddam with Hitler and opponents of the war (like Brent Scowcroftand Senator Chuck Hagel) with appeasers like Neville Chamberlain.11 7 Israeland the United States, they maintained, were facing a nebulous commonenemy, "international terrorism," and Iraq, to quote the New York Timescolumnist William Safire, was "the center of world terror."118 The war hawksportrayed Saddam as an especially aggressive and reckless leader who wouldnot only use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and Israelbut would also pass them on to terrorists.11 9 Identifying diplomacy andmultilateralism with weakness, neoconservative commentators had nothingbut contempt

for the UN and its inspectors in Iraq, not to mention

France.12 0 Indeed, they repeated the old Israeli adage that force has greatutility in the Middle East, because it is a region where, to quote Krauthammer,"power, above all, commands respect."12 1

One might argue that this analysis exaggerates the impact that open lettersto presidents, newspaper columns, books, and op-eds can have on thepolicy-making process. After all, relatively few people actually read the variousopen letters and there were plenty of other articles, editorials, and opedswritten in U.S. newspapers that had nothing to do with Iraq. Thisperspective would be wrong, however. The signatories of the various letterswritten to Presidents Bush and Clinton are powerful individuals who haveconnections and influence with important policy makers and lawmakers onCapitol Hill, some of whom they had worked closely with in the course oftheir careers. In fact, a number of the individuals who signed the earlier lettersto Clinton—including Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Feith—became keypolicy makers in the Bush administration. Thus, the signatories of the letterswritten to Bush in the period between 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq were notshouting into a void. The same was true for journalists like CharlesKrauthammer and William Safire, who wrote frequently about Iraq for twoof the country's leading newspapers, the Washington Post and the New YorkTimes, respectively. Their views were taken seriously by influential peopleinside and outside of the U.S. government, as were the articles that appearedin neoconservative magazines like the Weekly Standard. Indeed,these writings by outsiders worked to reinforce the arguments made by Bushadministration insiders, who shared their views on the need to invade Iraq.The underlying purpose of all these efforts was to define the terms of debatein a way that would facilitate an affirmative decision for war. By making war

seem both necessary and beneficial, by portraying potential opponents as"soft" on terror, and by linking America's fate to Israel's through the repetitionof familiar moral and strategic arguments, these efforts helped stifle seriousdiscussion about the pros and cons of an invasion and were animportant part of the broader campaign for war.12 2

FIXING THE INTELLIGENCE ON IRAQ

A key part of the public relations campaign to win support for invading Iraqwas the manipulation of intelligence information in order to make Saddamlook like an imminent threat. Scooter Libby was an important player in thisendeavor, visiting the CIA several times to pressure analysts to find evidence

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that would make the case for war. He also helped prepare a detailed briefingon the Iraq threat in early 2003 that was pushed on Colin Powell, who wasthen preparing his infamous presentation to the UN Security Council.12 3According to Bob Woodward, Powell's deputy, Richard Armitage, "wasappalled at what he considered overreaching and hyperbole. Libby wasdrawing only the worst conclusions from fragments and silky threads."12 4 AlthoughPowell discarded Libby's most outlandish claims, his UN presentationwas still riddled with errors, as Powell now acknowledges.12 5

The effort to manipulate intelligence, which was then leaked to analarmist prowar press, also involved two organizations that were createdafter 9/11 and reported directly to Undersecretary of Defense DouglasFeith.12 6 The Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group was tasked to findlinks between al Qaeda and Iraq that the intelligence community supposedlymissed. Its two key members were David Wurmser and MichaelMaloof, a Lebanese American who had close ties with Richard Perle. TheNew York Times reporter James Risen writes that "Israeli intelligence playeda hidden role in convincing Wolfowitz that he couldn't trust the CIA," andthis dissatisfaction helped cause him to rely on Ahmed Chalabi for intelligenceand to create the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group.12 7

The Office of Special Plans (OSP) was directed to find evidence thatcould be used to sell the war against Iraq. It was headed by Abram Shulsky, aneoconservative long associated with Wolfowitz, and its ranks included severalrecruits from pro-Israel think tanks like Michael Rubin from the AmericanEnterprise Institute, David Schenker from the

Washington Institute forNear East Policy, and Michael Makovsky, who had worked for then PrimeMinister Shimon Peres after graduating from college.12 8 OSP relied heavilyon information from Chalabi and other Iraqi exiles and it had close connectionsto various Israeli sources. Indeed, the Guardian reported that it "forgedclose ties to a parallel, ad hoc intelligence operation inside Ariel Sharon's officein Israel specifically to bypass Mossad and provide the Bush administrationwith more alarmist reports on Saddam's Iraq than Mossad was preparedto authorize."129 The Pentagon's inspector general released a report in February2007 that was critical of OSP for disseminating "alternative intelligenceassessments" that "were, in our opinion, inappropriate given that the intelligenceassessments were intelligence products and did not clearly show thevariance with the consensus of the Intelligence Community."13 0

The neoconservatives in the Pentagon and the White House not only reliedheavily on Chalabi and his fellow exiles for intelligence about Iraq, theyalso championed him as Iraq's future leader after Saddam was gone. The

CIA and the State Department, on the other hand, considered Chalabi dishonestand unreliable and kept him at arm's length. That severe judgmenthas now been vindicated, as we know that Chalabi and the INC fed theUnited States false information, and his relations with the U.S. occupationforces soon deteriorated, with Chalabi later being accused of providing classifiedinformation to Iran (a charge that he has denied). The neoconservatives'hopes that he would be the "George Washington of Iraq" fared nobetter than their other prewar forecasts.13 1

So why did neoconservatives embrace Chalabi? The INC leader had goneto considerable lengths to establish close ties with individuals and groups inthe lobby, and he had especially close links with JINSA, where he had been"a frequent guest at board meetings, symposia and other events since1997."13 2 He also cultivated close ties with pro-Israel organizations likeAIPAC, AEI, the Hudson Institute, and WINEP. Max Singer, who helpedfound the Hudson Institute, described Chalabi as a "rare find. He's deep inthe Arab world and at the same time he is fundamentally a man of theWest."13 3 When an embattled Chalabi returned to give his eighth address tothe AEI in early November 2005, that think tank's president introduced himas a "very great and very brave Iraqi patriot, liberal and liberator."134 Anotherbig supporter of Chalabi was Bernard Lewis, who argued that the INC leadershould be put in charge of Iraq after Baghdad fell.13 5

In return for the lobby's support, Chalabi pledged to foster good relationswith Israel once he gained power. According to Feith's former law partner,

L. Marc Zell, Chalabi also promised to rebuild the pipeline that once ranfrom Haifa in Israel to Mosul in Iraq.13 6 This was precisely what pro-Israelproponents of regime change wanted to hear, so they backed Chalabi in return.The journalist Matthew Berger laid out the essence of the bargain in theJewish Journal: "The INC saw improved relations as a way to tap Jewish influencein Washington and Jerusalem and to drum up increased support forits cause. For their part, the Jewish groups saw an opportunity to pave theway for better relations between Israel and Iraq, if and when the INC is involvedin replacing Saddam Hussein's regime."13 7 Not surprisingly, NathanGuttman reports that "the American Jewish community and the Iraqi opposition"had for years "taken pains to conceal" the links between them.13 8The neoconservatives and their allies did not operate in a vacuum, ofcourse, and they did not lead the United States to war by themselves. As emphasizedearlier, the war would probably not have occurred absent the September11 attacks, which forced President Bush and Vice President Cheneyto consider adopting a radically new foreign policy. Neoconservatives like

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Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who had been urging regimechange in Iraq since early 1998, were quick to link Saddam Hussein with9/11—even though there was no evidence that Saddam was involved—andto portray his overthrow as critical to winning the

war on terror. The lobby'sactions were a necessary but not sufficient condition for war.

Indeed, Richard Perle made precisely this point to George Packer in adiscussion about the role that the neoconservatives played in making theIraq war happen. "If Bush had staffed his administration with a group ofpeople selected by Brent Scowcroft and Jim Baker," Perle noted, "whichmight well have happened, then it could have been different, because theywould not have carried into it the ideas that the people who wound up in importantpositions brought to it."13 9 The New York Times columnist Thomas L.Friedman offered a similar appraisal in May 2003, telling Ari Shavit ofHaaretz that Iraq was "the war the neoconservatives wanted . . . the war theneoconservatives marketed .. . I could give you the names of 25 people (allof whom are at the moment within a five-block radius of this office [inWashington, D.C.]), who, if you exiled them to a desert island a year and ahalf ago, the Iraq war would not have happened." We agree completely withPerle's and Friedman's observations, while recognizing that it was a combinationof individuals, ideas, and circumstances that came together to producethe ultimate decision for war.14 0

WAS IRAQ A WAR FOR OIL?

Some readers might concede that the Israel lobby had some influence overthe decision to invade Iraq but argue that its overall weight in the decisionmakingprocess was minimal. Instead, many American and foreign observersappear to think that oil—not Israel—was the real motivation behind the invasionof Iraq in 2003. In one variant of this story, the Bush administrationwas determined to control the vast reserves of oil in the Middle East, becausethat would give the United States enormous geopolitical leverage over potentialadversaries. Conquering Iraq, according to this scenario, was seen by theadministration as a giant step toward achieving that goal. An alternative version

sees the oil-producing states and especially the oil companies as the realculprits behind the Iraq war, driven primarily by a desire for higher prices andgreater profits. Even scholars who are often critical of Israel and of the lobby,such as Noam Chomsky, apparently subscribe to this idea, which was popularizedin filmmaker Michael Moore's 2004 documentary Fahrenheit 9/11.141

The claim that the conquest of Iraq was mainly about oil has a certainprima facie plausibility, given the importance of oil to the world economy.14 2But this explanation faces both logical and empirical difficulties. As emphasizedin Chapter 2, U.S. policy makers have long been concerned about whocontrols Persian Gulf oil; they have been especially concerned about thedanger that one state might control all of it. The United States has been involvedwith various oil-producing countries in the Gulf, but no Americangovernment, including the Bush administration, has seriously consideredconquering the major oil-producing countries in that region to gain coerciveleverage over other countries around the world. The United States mightconsider invading a major oil-producing state if a revolution or an embargocaused its oil to stop flowing into world markets. But that was not the casewith Iraq; Saddam was eager to sell his oil to any customer willing to pay forit. Moreover, if the United States wanted to conquer another country in orderto gain control of its oil, Saudi Arabia—with larger reserves and a smallerpopulation—would have been a much more attractive target. Plus, binLaden was born and raised in Saudi Arabia, and fifteen of the nineteen terroristswho struck the United States on September 11 were Saudis (nonewere from Iraq). If control of oil were Bush's real objective, 9/11 would havebeen an ideal pretext to act. Occupying Saudi Arabia would not have been asimple task, but it would almost certainly have been easier than trying topacify the large, restive, and well-armed population of Iraq.

There is also hardly any evidence that oil interests were actively pushingthe Bush administration to invade Iraq in 2002-03. In 1990-91, by contrast,Saudi Arabia's leaders clearly pressed the first Bush administration touse force to drive Iraq out of Kuwait. They feared, like many American policymakers at the time, that Saddam might next invade Saudi Arabia, whichwould place much of the region's oil under his control. Prince Bandar, theSaudi ambassador to the United States, worked closely with pro-Israelgroups here to build support for ousting Saddam from Kuwait.14 3 But thestory was very

different in the run-up to the second Gulf War: this timeSaudi Arabia publicly opposed using American force against Iraq.14 4 Saudileaders feared that a war would lead to the breakup of Iraq and destabilizethe Middle East. And even if Iraq remained intact, the Shia were likely to ascendto power, which worried the Sunnis who ran Saudi Arabia not only forreligious reasons but also because it would increase Iran's influence in theregion. In addition, the Saudis faced growing anti-Americanism at home,which was likely to get worse if the United States launched a preventive waragainst Iraq.

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Nor were the oil companies, which generally seek to curry favor with bigoil producers like Saddams Iraq or the Islamic Republic of Iran, major playersin the decision to conquer Iraq. They did not lobby for the 2003 war,which most of them thought was a foolish idea. As Peter Beinart noted inthe New Republic in September 2002, "It isn't war that the American oil industryhas been lobbying for all these years; it's the end of sanctions."14 5 Theoil companies, as is almost always the case, wanted to make money, not war.

DREAMS OF REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The Iraq war was not supposed to be a costly quagmire. Rather, it was intendedas the first step in a larger plan to reorder the Middle East in waysthat would benefit long-term American and Israeli interests. Specifically, theUnited States was not just going to remove Saddam Hussein from powerand go home; the invasion and occupation would, in this dream, quicklyturn Iraq into a democracy, which would then serve as an attractive modelfor people living in the various authoritarian states in the region. The resultsfrom Iraq would trigger a cascade of democratic dominoes, although it still

might be necessary to use the sword to spread democracy to some countriesin the Middle East besides Iraq. But once democracy took hold across theregion, regimes friendly to Israel and the United States would be the norm,the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians would, in the words of the"Clean Break" study, be "transcended," other regional rivalries would bemuted, and the twin problems of terrorism and nuclear proliferation wouldlargely disappear.

Vice President Cheney laid out this ambitious rationale for regionaltransformation in the speech to the VFW convention on August 26, 2002,opening the administration's campaign to sell the Iraq war. "When thegravest of threats are eliminated," he said, "the freedom-loving peoples ofthe region will have a chance to promote the values that can bring lastingpeace . . . Extremists in the region would have to rethink their strategy ofjihad. Moderates throughout the region would take heart. And our abilityto advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process would be enhanced."14 6Cheney would repeat these arguments on several occasions over the next sixmonths.

President Bush spoke with similar enthusiasm about regional transformationas he made the case for war against Iraq. On February 26, 2003, hetold an audience at AEI that the United States aims to "cultivate liberty and

peace in the Middle East." He emphasized that "the world has a clear interestin the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations donot breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit ofa better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the MiddleEast." Furthermore, he claimed, "Success in Iraq could also begin a newstage for Middle Eastern peace, and set in motion progress towards a trulydemocratic Palestinian peace."14 7

This ambitious strategy, grounded in an almost theological belief in thetransformative power of freedom, was a dramatic departure from previous

U.S. policy, and there was certainly no indication before 9/11 that eitherBush or Cheney would embrace it. Indeed, both men—as well as NationalSecurity Adviser Rice—were on record as being opposed to the ambitiouskind of nation building that was at the heart of regional transformation, andBush had sharply criticized the Clinton administration for its emphasis onnation building during the 2000 campaign. So what had produced this shift?According to a March 2003 story in the Wall Street Journal, the critical drivingforces behind this major change in U.S. Middle East policy were Israeland the

neoconservatives in the lobby. The headline says it all: "President'sDream: Changing Not Just Regime but a Region: A Pro-U.S., DemocraticArea Is a Goal That Has Israeli and Neoconservative Roots."14 8Charles Krauthammer says this grand scheme to spread democracy acrossthe Middle East was the brainchild of Natan Sharansky, the Israeli politicianwhose writings are said to have impressed President Bush.14 9 But Sharanskywas hardly a lone voice in Israel. In fact, Israelis across the political spectrummaintained that toppling Saddam would alter the Middle East to Israel's advantage.Writing in the New York Times in early September 2002, formerPrime Minister Ehud Barak argued that "putting an end to Saddam Hussein'sregime will change the geopolitical landscape of the Arab world." He claimedthat "an Arab world without Saddam Hussein would enable many from thisgeneration [leaders about to come into power] to embrace the gradual democraticopening that some of the Persian Gulf states and Jordan have begun toenjoy." Barak also maintained that toppling Saddam would "create an openingfor forward movement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."15 0

In August 2002, Yuval Steinitz, a Likud party member of the Knesset'sForeign Affairs and Defense Committee, told the Christian Science Monitor,"After Iraq is taken by U.S. troops and we see a new regime installed as inAfghanistan, and Iraqi bases become American bases, it will be very easy topressure Syria to stop supporting terrorist organizations like Hizbullah and

Islamic Jihad, to allow the Lebanese army to dismantle Hizbullah, andmaybe to put an end to the Syrian occupation in Lebanon. If this happenswe will really see a new Middle East."15 1 Similarly, Aluf Benn reported inHaaretz in February 2003 that "senior IDF officers and those close to PrimeMinister Ariel Sharon, such as National Security Advisor Ephraim Halevy,paint a rosy picture of the wonderful future Israel can expect after the war.They envision a domino effect, with the fall of Saddam Hussein followed bythat of Israel's other enemies: Arafat, Hassan Nasrallah, Bashar Assad, theayatollah in Iran and maybe even Muhammar Gadaffi. Along with theseleaders will disappear terror and weapons of mass destruction."15 2

The New York Times also reported that Halevy gave a speech in Munich inFebruary 2003 where he said, "The shock waves emerging from post-SaddamBaghdad could have wide-ranging effects in Tehran, Damascus, and in Ramallah."15 3 The author of the article noted that Israel "is hoping that once SaddamHussein is dispensed with, the dominoes will start to tumble. According tothis hope . . . moderates and reformers throughout the region would be encouragedto put new pressure on their own governments, not excepting thePalestinian Authority of Yasir Arafat." The Forward summed up Israeli thinkingabout regional transformation in an article published just before the war:"Israel's top political, military and economic echelons have come to regard thelooming Iraq war as a virtual deus ex machina that will turn the political andeconomic tables and extricate Israel from its current morass."15 4

Some might argue that Israel's leaders are too sophisticated and experiencedto believe in a deus ex machina and countenance such an ambitiousscheme, and too familiar with the complexities of their region to believe itcould succeed. But in fact, Israel's leaders have a long history of favoringremarkablyambitious plans to remake the local map. The original Zionistdream of reestablishing a Jewish state where none had existed for nearly twomillennia was nothing if not ambitious, and as discussed in Chapter 1, DavidBen-Gurion had hoped to seize all of the West Bank, part of Lebanon, andportions of Egypt in the 1956 Suez War. Similarly, Ariel Sharon believed theinvasion of Lebanon in 1982 would lead to the creation of a pro-Israel Christianstate there and vanquish the PLO once and for all, thereby cementing Israel'scontrol of the Occupied Territories. Given that history, it is perhaps notso surprising that many Israeli leaders held out the hope that the UnitedStates might be able to succeed where their earlier plans had failed.

By 2002, many neoconservatives were also heavily invested in the idea thatthe United States could democratize the Middle East and make it a morefriendly environment for America and Israel. They had reached that positionover the course of the 1990s as they became increasingly disenchanted with

U.S. foreign policy after the Cold War.Pro-Israel groups—and not only neoconservatives—have long been interestedin having the U.S. military directly involved in the Middle East so that itcan help protect Israel. They are especially interested in seeing large numbersof American troops permanently stationed there.15 5 But they had limited successon this front during the Cold War, because America acted as an offshorebalancer in the region. Most U.S. forces designated for the Middle East, likethe Rapid Deployment Force, were kept "over the horizon" and out of harm'sway. Washington maintained a favorable balance of power by playing localpowers against each other, which is why the Reagan administration supportedSaddam against revolutionary Iran during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88).

This policy changed after the first Gulf War, when the Clinton administrationadopted a strategy of "dual containment." Instead of using Iran andIraq to balance each other—with the United States shifting sides asneeded—the new strategy called for stationing substantial American forcesin the region to contain both of them at once. The father of dual containmentwas Martin Indyk, who first articulated the strategy in May 1993 atWINEP and then implemented it as director for Near East and South AsianAffairs at the National Security Council.15 6 As Indyk's Brookings colleagueKenneth Pollack observes, dual containment was a policy adopted largely in

response to "Israel's security concerns." Specifically, Israel made it clear tothe Clinton administration that it "was willing to move ahead in the peaceprocess only if it felt reasonably secure" from Iran.15 7

There was considerable dissatisfaction with dual containment by themid-1990s, because it made the United States the mortal enemy of twocountries that hated each other, and it forced Washington to bear the burdenof containing both of them. As discussed in Chapter 10, AIPAC andother groups in the lobby not only saved the policy, they persuaded Congressand Clinton to toughen it up. The neoconservatives went even further, however;they were increasingly convinced that dual containment was not workingand that Saddam Hussein had to be removed from power and replacedby a democratic government. Their thinking was reflected in the two open

letters that they sent to President Clinton in early 1998 as well as their supportfor the Iraq Liberation Act.

At about the same time, the belief that spreading democracy across theMiddle East would pacify the entire area was beginning to take root withinneoconservative circles. A few neoconservatives had flirted with this idea inthe wake of the Cold War, but it was not widely embraced until the latterpart of the 1990s.158 This line of thinking, of course, was evident in the 1996"Clean Break" study that a group of neoconservatives had written for Netanyahu.By 2002, when invading Iraq had become a front-burner issue,regional transformation had become an article of faith among neoconservatives,who, in turn, helped make it the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy.15 9Thus, Israeli leaders, neoconservatives, and the Bush administration all sawwar with Iraq as the first step in an ambitious campaign to remake the MiddleEast.

CONCLUSION

The Bush administration's plans for Iraq and the wider region have been astunning failure. Not only is the American military stuck in a losing war, butthere is little prospect of exporting democracy across the Middle East anytimesoon. Iran has been the main beneficiary of this ill-conceived adventureand it seems as determined as ever to acquire a nuclear capability. Syria, likeIran, remains at odds with Washington, and both states have a powerful interestin having the U.S. military bogged down in Iraq. Hamas now dominatesGaza and the Palestinian Authority is badly split—making peace withIsrael

even more elusive—and Hezbollah is more powerful than ever inLebanon, after having stood up to Israel in the 2006 war. We may be witnessingthe "birth pangs of a new Middle East," to use Secretary of State Rice'sregrettable phrase, but it will almost certainly be more unstable and dangerousthan the one that existed before the United States invaded Iraq.16 0

The war in Iraq has not been good for Israel either, especially since it hasstrengthened Iran's hand in the region. Indeed, the Forward reported in early2007 that there is a "growing chorus" of voices in Israel who are saying thatthe Jewish state "could find itself in more danger" now that Saddam hasbeen removed from power.16 1 Amatzia Baram, an Israeli expert on Iraq whoargued for Saddam's ouster in prewar interviews in the AIPAC newsletterNear East Report, now says, "If I knew then what I know today [January

2007], I would not have recommended going to war, because Saddam wasfar less dangerous than I thought." Moreover, he admitted that the invasionhad produced "much, much more [terrorism] than I expected." Yuval Diskin,the head of Shin Bet, Israel's domestic security service, said in February2006, "I'm not sure we won't miss Saddam."162

As the United States looks for ways to extricate itself from this disastroussituation, pressure has been growing on the Bush administration to talk withIran and Syria, and to make a concerted effort to settle the Israeli-Palestinianconflict. The neoconservatives and the Israelis, of course, believed that theroad to Jerusalem ran through Baghdad. Once the United States won in Iraq,

they believed, the Palestinians would make peace on Israel's terms. But thebipartisan Iraq Study Group, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and manyothers believe the opposite is true: the road to Baghdad runs through Jerusalem.16 3 In other words, creating a viable Palestinian state will help theUnited States deal with Iraq and other regional problems. Israel and thelobby have vigorously challenged this line of argument, insisting that America'stroubles in Iraq have nothing to do with the Palestinians. Indeed,Haaretz reported in late November 2006, just before the release of the IraqStudy Group report, that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert "hopes the Jewishlobby can rally a Democratic majority in the new Congress to counter any diversionfrom the status quo on the Palestinians."16 4 Similarly, a number ofpro-Israel groups still maintain that the United States should refuse to talkwith Iran and Syria until these states agree to all of Washington's demands.165

The Bush administration faces growing pressure to pull out of Iraq, butIsraeli leaders have encouraged it to stay and finish the job. Why? Becausethese leaders believe that a U.S. withdrawal would jeopardize Israel's security.Both Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Prime Minister Olmert made thispoint to AIPAC's annual conference in March 2007. Livni said that "in a regionwhere impressions are important, countries must be careful not todemonstrate weakness and surrender to extremists."16 6 Olmert was evenblunter: "Those who are concerned for Israel's security .. . for the stabilityof the entire Middle East should recognize the need for American success inIraq and responsible exit." He ended his remarks by saying that "whenAmerica succeeds in Iraq, Israel is safer. The friends of Israel know it. Thefriends who care about Israel know it."16 7 Critics castigated Olmert for makingthese remarks, mainly because his comments provided additional evidencethat Israel had backed the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Bradley Burston,who writes for Haaretz, was especially angry with Olmert for venturing into

the American debate on Iraq. He had a simple message for the prime minister:"Stay the hell out of it."16 8

Olmert had actually expressed his support for America's continued presencein Iraq during a visit to the White House in November 2006, saying,"We are very much impressed and encouraged by the stability which thegreat operation of America in Iraq brought to the Middle East."16 9 Evensome of Israel's consistent backers were put off by

Olmert's prowar remarks,with Congressman Gary Ackerman saying, "I'm shocked. It's a very unrealisticobservation. Most of us here understand that our policy has been a thoroughand total disaster for the United States."17 0

Given that many Americans now share Ackerman's sentiments about thewar, we should not be surprised that some Israelis and their American allieshave tried to rewrite the historical record to absolve Israel of any responsibilityfor the Iraq disaster. In March 2007, the editor of the Jerusalem Post,David Horovitz, wrote about "the false notion that Israel encouraged the USto fight the Iraq War."17 1 Similarly, Shai Feldman, former head of the JaffeeCenter for Strategic Studies and now head of the Crown Center for MiddleEast Studies at Brandeis, told Glenn Frankel of the Washington Post in thesummer of 2006, "Look, Israel didn't mobilize anybody over Iraq, and associatingIsrael with the neocons on this issue is preposterous. Israel didn't seeIraq as a danger, and what's more, it had no interest in pushing the Bushadministration'sdemocracy agenda."17 2 This view undoubtedly reflects Feldman'sbeliefs about Israel's interests and the hierarchy of threats it faced,but as we have shown, it is contrary to what Israel's leaders were actuallysaying and doing in the run-up to the war.

Not to be outdone, Martin Kramer, a research fellow at WINEP, claimsthat any attempt to link Israel and the lobby with the war in Iraq is "simplya falsehood," arguing that "in the year preceding the Iraq War, Israel timeand again disagreed with the United States, arguing that Iran posed thegreater threat."17 3 But as shown above, Israel's concerns about Iran never ledit to undertake a significant effort to halt the march to war. To the contrary,top Israeli officials were doing everything in their power to make sure thatthe United States went after Saddam and did not get cold feet at the lastmoment. They considered Iraq a serious threat and were convinced that

Bush would deal with Iran after he finished with Iraq. They might have preferredthat America focus on Iran before Iraq, but as Kramer admits, Israelis"shed no tears over Saddam's demise." Instead, their leaders took to theAmerican airwaves, wrote op-eds, testified before Congress, and worked

closely with the neoconservatives in the Pentagon and the vice president'soffice to shape the intelligence about Iraq and coordinate the drive to war.

Yossi Alpher, an Israeli strategist at the Jaffe Center, now maintains thatformer Prime Minister Sharon had serious reservations about invading Iraqand he privately warned Bush against it. Alpher even hints that Sharonmight have been able to prevent the war had he spoken out about his concerns.He writes, "Had Sharon made his criticism public, citing the dangersposed to vital Israeli interests, might he have made a difference in the prewardebate in the United States and the world?"17 4 This is a convenient alibinow that the occupation of Iraq has gone south, but there is no evidencein the public record that Sharon ever advised Bush not to attack Iraq. Infact, there is considerable evidence that the Israeli leader and his key adviserstrongly endorsed the war and encouraged Bush to begin it sooner ratherthan later. If Sharon believed the war to be a mistake, why did his ownspokesman repeatedly stress the danger of Iraq's WM D and why did Sharonhimself warn the Bush administration that putting off the attack "will notcreate a more convenient environment for action in the future"?17 5

It is possible that Sharon made different arguments behind closed doorsthan he made in public. This is not likely, however, as word of Sharon's oppositionto the war would surely have leaked out before it began, if not in thefirst year or two after Baghdad fell. Sharon was rarely reticent about expressinghis views—even when doing so involved disagreements with the UnitedStates—and it is hard to believe that he would have kept silent in public ifhe thought that the decision to invade Iraq would be harmful to Israel. Inshort, neither facts nor logic support Alpher's claim.

"Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan." As the variousprogenitors of the Iraq disaster now seek to deny their paternity, PresidentJohn F. Kennedy's rueful remark is more appropriate than ever. But Iraq didnot always look like the blunder it has turned out to be. For a few shortmonths in the spring of 2003, the

United States appeared to have won astunning victory and there was little need for Israel's defenders to denyresponsibilityfor the war. During this brief window of opportunity, in fact, keyIsraelis and their American allies began to pressure the Bush administrationto bring U.S. power to bear on Syria and Iran, in the hope that these tworogue states would suffer the same fate as Saddam Hussein's regime. Let usnow consider how Israel and the lobby influenced U.S. policy on Syria, andthen turn to Iran.

9

TAKING AIM AT SYRIA

America has had a problematic relationship with Syria for nearly fifty years.The Ba'th regime was a key Soviet client during the Cold War, and its authoritariangovernment has committed serious human rights abuses in thepast and still denies basic freedoms to its population. President Bush didnot include Syria in his infamous "axis of evil," but it is often depicted asa "rogue state" that threatens important American interests. U.S. policytoward Syria became more hostile after September 11, 2001, and the fall ofBaghdad in April 2003 fueled speculation that the United States was goingto go after Damascus as well. The deteriorating situation in Iraq has endedsuch talk for the moment, but relations with Damascus have not improvedand confrontation remains the order of the day.

Yet if one looks at Syria with a more detached eye, it is not obvious whyit would be in the U.S. national interest to have a strictly adversarial

relationship with that Arab country. Washington and Damascus have neverbeen especially friendly, but they have cooperated to their mutual benefiton a number of occasions, and Syria's modest military capabilities pose noserious threat to vital U.S. interests. It is difficult to see—given presentcircumstances—why Syria should be considered an ideal candidate for regimechange while equally odious dictatorships in the Middle East and elsewhereenjoy American patronage.

In fact, the Bush administration's unremitting hostility toward Syria hasbeen strategically unwise. Specifically, it has damaged America's position inthe Arab and Islamic world, hindered U.S. efforts to thwart nuclear proliferation,made it more difficult to stabilize Iraq, and made America's terrorismproblem worse, not better. Thus, it is not surprising that many voices inside

the United States have recently called for President Bush to reverse courseand seek a modus vivendi with Damascus. The Iraq Study Group, for example,called in December 2006 for the Bush administration to "actively engage"with Syria in "diplomatic dialogue, without preconditions."1 That samemonth, four U.S. senators visited Damascus to talk with Syria's president,Bashar al-Assad, and in April 2007, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi leda bipartisan delegation of six House members—including Tom Lantos andHenry Waxman, whose pro-Israel credentials are well established—to Syriato speak with Assad about pushing the peace process forward.2

Israel and the lobby have played a central role in pushing the Bush administrationto pursue an increasingly confrontational policy toward Syria,albeit with some reluctance. The lobby has worked hard to get the UnitedStates to isolate and pressure Damascus, even when doing so jeopardizedvaluable forms of collaboration. In the absence of this pressure, Washington'srelationship with Syria would be markedly different and would probablybe more consistent with the American national interest. The UnitedStates and Syria would hardly be allies if the lobby was less influential, buta pragmatic and mutually beneficial relationship would be much more likely.

THE SYRIAN THREAT

Syria is not a serious military threat to the United States or to Israel. Itsdefensebudget is less than one-fifth the size of Israel's, and it has an unimpressivearmy and air force that the Israel Defense Forces

would easily defeat ifserious fighting ever occurred.3 The IDF had little difficulty routing Syria'sforces during its 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and that war occurred whenSyria was still getting a great deal of help from its Soviet patron. Damascushas been on its own since the Soviet Union collapsed, however, while Israelhas continued to receive significant U.S. aid every year. A war between Israeland Syria would be a gross mismatch, which is why Syria's leaders go toconsiderable lengths to avoid provoking Israel.

The American military would have even less trouble defeating the Syriansin a war. Syria's military is much weaker than Iran's or Iraq's under Saddam,and it has not engaged a serious adversary since Israel trounced it in1982. Unlike Iran today or Iraq under Saddam, Syria lacks the populationsize and wealth to be a regional hegemon. It can make life more difficult forthe United States and for Israel, but it lacks the wherewithal to be a seriousthreat to either country.

Furthermore, Syria does not have a nuclear weapons program, and thereis no reason to think that it will pursue one anytime soon. It does havechemical weapons, which were first acquired from Egypt in 1973, and itmay have a biological weapons program.4 It also has a large inventory of bal

- listic missiles and thus the capability to deliver its chemical weapons againstIsrael and other countries in the region, although not the United States. ButIsrael has never worried much about this threat, because it has its own

chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and it could inflict far greaterdamage on Syria than Syria could inflict on Israel. In other words, Israel hasan effective deterrent against Syria's chemical weapons.5Syria's ability to create trouble rests mostly in its support for a number ofterrorist organizations, notably Hezbollah, but also Hamas and Islamic Jihad.Indeed, Hamas leader Khaled Meshal lives in Damascus. All of thesegroups threaten Israel, but unlike al Qaeda, none of them—includingHezbollah—directly threatens the United States. As Moshe Maoz, an experton Syria at Hebrew University, notes, "Syria is not a saint—everybody knowsthat—but Hezbollah is mostly a threat against Israel."6 Moreover, Syria andal Qaeda are bitter enemies, mainly because bin Laden is a Sunni and an Islamicfundamentalist, while Assad is the Shia leader of a secular state. Infact, al Qaeda is believed to have links to the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood,an Islamic terrorist group that has battled the secular Ba'thist government inSyria for more than twenty years.7 Given that Damascus and Washingtonshare a common enemy in al Qaeda, it is hardly surprising that in the wakeof 9/11 Syria began providing the Bush administration with important intelligenceabout bin Laden's organization. Contrary to the rhetoric about theglobal war on terror, it would be wrong to argue that Syria supports "internationalterrorism"—a global network of terrorist groups and states that targetAmerica and Israel alike. Rather, Syria supports a particular set of terroristorganizations whose agenda is focused primarily on Israel alone.

One might argue that Syria is a serious threat to the United States, becauseit supports the insurgency in Iraq. But there is little hard evidencethat Damascus is providing support to the Iraqi insurgents, which is surelywhy the Bush administration has mainly made that charge against Iran, notSyria. It is probably the case that Syria is turning a blind eye to some of thefighters and weapons that flow across its borders into Iraq. But Washingtonhas pursued a confrontational policy toward Damascus since September 11,which gives the Syrians powerful incentives to keep the U.S. military busyin Iraq. Ultimately, however, Syria is not the source of America's troubles inIraq, and Damascus would have little interest in undermining the U.S. oc

cupation if President Bush and his lieutenants were not threatening the Assadregime. The bottom line is that Syria is not a serious danger to theUnited States, and it has little reason to pick a

quarrel with the world's mostpowerful state.

In fact, Damascus has had reasonably good relations with Washington ata number of points in the recent past. Syria fought alongside the UnitedStates in the 1991 war against Iraq, and the two countries had cordial ifguarded relations during the 1990s, when the United States was attemptingto broker a peace deal between Damascus and Jerusalem.8 President Clintoneven visited Damascus in October 1994 to meet with President Hafezal-Assad, the first visit to Syria by an American president in twenty years.Afterward,Clinton remarked, "I went there because I was convinced that weneeded to add new energy to the talks, and I came away convinced thatwe have."9 Later, in the fall of 2002, when Syria was a nonpermanent memberof the Security Council, it voted for UN Resolution 1441, which calledfor the return of UN weapons inspectors to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Andalthough the Bush administration played a key role in forcing Syria out ofLebanon in 2005, for many years the United States had counted on Syria toshut down Lebanon's civil war (1976-89) and to keep the peace there.10

Syrian President Assad is certainly not interested in being America'senemy. Flynt Leverett, a former Bush administration official and one of theWest's foremost experts on Syria, notes that "Bashar has repeatedly statedhis interest in a better relationship with the United States. Such interest isfully in keeping with father Hafez's script and in line with any realisticassessmentof Syria's strategic needs." Leverett also believes improved relationsare "critical to his [Assad's] long-term ambitions for internal reform."11Seymour Hersh, who visited Assad in his Damascus office in 2003, foundhim eager to talk because "he wanted to change his image, and the image ofhis country."12

Syria has also been trying to negotiate a peace agreement with Israelsince the early 1990s. They came close to reaching a deal in early 2000, butEhud Barak, the Israeli prime minister at the time, got cold feet at the lastmoment. Since then, the Syrians have made numerous offers to restart thenegotiations and try to settle their differences. But Barak's successors—Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert—have refused and instead have pursuedconfrontational policies toward Syria. Those same Israeli leaders have alsopushed the United States to treat Damascus as a dangerous adversary.

TAKING AIM AT SYRIA

ISRAEL AND THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

To grasp the essence of the complex dance between Washington, Jerusalem,and Damascus, and the role that the lobby has played, one must first understandwhy Israel came tantalizingly close to signing a peace agreement withSyria in 2000 but has been unwilling to talk with Assad since then.1 3

The taproot of the present conflict between Israel and Syria involves theGolan Heights. Israel took that territory from Syria in the 1967 war anddrove eighty thousand Syrians from their homes. Israeli law was extendedover the Golan Heights in 1981, in what was essentially a de facto annexation.1 4 There are now about eighteen thousand Jewish settlers living there inthirty-two settlements and one city.1 5 Syria is deeply committed to gettingthis territory back, and toward this end it supports terrorist groups likeHamas and Hezbollah; the Syrian military is too weak to threaten Israel andthese groups are its only means of putting pressure on Israel. In 1994, PrimeMinister Yitzhak Rabin agreed in principle to return all of the Golan Heightsto Syria in return for full normalization of relations between the two countries.It was widely understood that the "Rabin deposit," as it came to beknown, meant that Israel would withdraw to the border that existed on June4, 1967, and that Syria would then end all support for Hezbollah, Hamas,and Islamic Jihad.1 6

Rabin was assassinated a year later, but his successors—Shimon Peresand Benjamin Netanyahu—remained committed in principle to withdrawingto the June 4, 1967, borders. Peres s tenure in office was too short tocraft a deal, however, and Netanyahu, for various reasons, did not place asufficiently high priority on it. Netanyahu's successor, Ehud Barak, was alsowilling to give back virtually all of the Golan Heights to Syria, although hewould not commit himself to a full withdrawal to the 1967 border.17

Relations between Israel and Syria were not that bad in the latter half ofthe 1990s, as the two sides maneuvered to reach an agreement. The Clintonadministration was deeply involved in the negotiating process, devoted tobrokering the final deal, much the way Jimmy Carter pushed forward a dealbetween Egypt and Israel at Camp David in 1979. And this meant that Syriaand the United States had a reasonably good relationship during this period,even though Syria was a one-party dictatorship and the Clinton administrationwas publicly committed to "expanding democracy." Israel actually welcomedthis cordial relationship between Damascus and Washington at thetime, because it wanted the United States to help resolve its long-standingfeud with Syria. A headline in the New York Times after President Clinton

visited Damascus in October 1994 makes this point clear: "Israelis Look toClinton Trip for Progress with Syrians."1 8

In the fall of 1999, Clinton thought he finally had the makings of a dealbetween Israel and Syria. At the strong urging of Barak, he gathered the twosides together in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in early January 2000. ButBarak, suddenly aware that Israeli public opinion was cool to giving theGolan Heights back to Syria, became inflexible and tried to show that hewas being a tough negotiator by slowing the process. The talks collapsed,with Dennis Ross, Clinton's chief Middle East negotiator, later remarking,"If not for Barak's cold feet, there might have been a deal in January 2000."19A subsequent meeting two months later in Geneva between Assad and Clinton

went nowhere, mainly because the Syrian leader no longer trustedBarak. Clinton clearly blamed Israel, not Syria, for the collapse of thenegotiations.2 0

Sharon replaced Barak as prime minister in February 2001. This developmentchanged Israeli-Syrian relations for the worse, which in turn underminedSyrian-American relations as well. Unlike his four predecessors,Sharon had no intention of giving back the Golan Heights. "What was offeredback then," he said, "in my wildest imagination, I would not have considered."2 1 Sharon's successor, Ehud Olmert, has also made it clear that "theGolan Heights will remain in our hands forever."22

This insistence on keeping that disputed territory as part of Israel enjoyswidespread support on the Israeli right. When Javier Solana, the secretarygeneral of the Council of the European Union, said in March 2007 that hewould like to help Syria get back the territory it lost in 1967, Yisrael Katz, aKnesset member from Likud, responded, "Israel will never retreat from theGolan Heights; the region is an integral part of Israel and vital for its securityand protection."2 3 Moreover, Benjamin Netanyahu apparently now believesthat Israel must remain in the Golan Heights.2 4 Israeli public opinionis clearly in favor of hanging on to the territory as well; a December 2006 surveyindicated that 64 percent of the respondents opposed withdrawing fromthe Golan even if it led to full peace with Syria. By contrast, only 19 percentfavored the deal. A previous poll in early October 2006 produced similar results:70 percent opposed full withdrawal in exchange for peace while 16percent favored it.2 5

Despite this entrenched resistance to withdrawal, there is substantialsupport within Israel's governing circles for trying to negotiate a deal withSyria, especially within the military. The IDF chief of staff said in 2004 thatIsrael was capable of defending itself without the Golan Heights and would

be more secure if it signed a peace treaty with Syria.2 6 Not only would Israelthen have normal relations with a long-standing enemy, but Hezbollah,Hamas, and Islamic Jihad would no longer receive support from Syria, andin the case of Hezbollah, loss of Syrian backing would make it much moredifficult for Iran to supply it with weapons. Even more important, Syriacould use its considerable influence in Lebanon to rein in Hezbollah. Thisline of argument took on greater urgency after the 2006 Lebanon war, inwhich Hezbollah was able to

fight the IDF to a standstill. In response, anumber of influential Israelis, including a former chief of staff and a formerhead of Shin Bet, created an organization called the Forum of the PeaceInitiative with Syria. Its goal is to persuade the Israeli government to respondto Syrian peace overtures and hopefully reach a peace agreement betweenDamascus and Jerusalem.2 7 Haaretz has also been a strong supporterof negotiations with Damascus, as has Olmert's defense minister, AmirPeretz.2 8 This approach, however, was firmly rejected by both Sharon andOlmert.

Given that Israel's current leaders do not intend to return the GolanHeights to Syria, they have no interest in reopening peace talks with Damascus.2 9 What is there to talk about? To justify their intransigence, they seek toportray Syria as a rogue state that cannot be trusted and that understands onlythe mailed fist. It is no wonder that the Syrian ambassador to Washington saidin early 2004 that "the more we talk about peace, the more we are attacked."30Confrontation, not cooperation, is the best policy for dealing with Syria, accordingto Israel's current leaders, who have an obvious interest in getting theBush administration to see Syria in a similar light. Thus, in contrast to the late1990s, when Israel favored cooperation with Syria, since 2001 both Israel anda number of its American backers have worked hard to convince the U.S. governmentto treat Syria as a hostile and dangerous enemy.

Syria still hopes to get the Golan Heights back, and it has made repeatedattempts to reopen talks with Israel and negotiate a peace agreement alongthe lines of the "Rabin deposit."31 But Israel's leaders have refused even tocountenance a dialogue with Syria. After a Syrian peace offer in early December2003, the veteran military correspondent Ze'ev Schiff observed inHaaretz that "the most astonishing thing about the Syrian president's proposal

to resume talks with Israel is the response of official Israel . . . PrimeMinister Ariel Sharon has remained silent. Not a word has been heard fromhim .. . In the past we always hoped for such proposals."3 2

In a mid-December 2006 interview with the Italian newspaper La Repubblica,President Assad called on Olmert to negotiate with him: "Talk to

Syria, and like many Israelis are saying, 'even if you think it's a bluff you havenothing to lose.'"3 3 At the same time, the Syrian foreign minister told theWashington Post that Syria would be willing to begin talks with Israel withoutany preconditions, which appeared to be a significant change in Syria'sbargaining position.3 4 Olmert rejected the opportunity to start talks andblamed it on President Bush, who, according to the prime minister, had forbiddenhim to negotiate with Syria.3 5 The implication of the prime minister'scomments—which have been repeated by many other Israelis—is that hewould talk with Assad were it not for his loyalty to Bush.

This argument is unconvincing. Not only did the U.S. ambassador to Israeldeny that Washington was preventing Israel from talking with Syria, butIsrael is not in the habit of taking orders from any U.S. leader when its vitalinterests are at stake.3 6 Most important, there is hardly any evidence thatOlmert is genuinely interested in meaningful peace talks with Syria. A seniorIsraeli government official told Aluf Benn of Haaretz that Israel, inBenn's words, "never requested American permission to talk with Syria, as ithas not yet decided whether it wishes to do so."3 7 The prime minister's refusalto negotiate is unsurprising, because an agreement "comes with a pricetag," to quote Defense Minister Peretz, which is giving up the GolanHeights, and Olmert is opposed to making that concession. Olmert grasped"the pretext" provided by Bush, the Haaretz reporter Gideon Samet writes,"because he will not admit the real reason: He does not want to come downfrom the Golan Heights."3 8

Further evidence of Syria's interest in making peace with Israel and Israel'sunwillingness to seize the opportunity was revealed in January 2007,when the Israeli press reported that Israelis and Syrians had met secretly inEurope between September 2004 and July 2006 for the purpose of comingup with a proposal for an agreement between the two states. The meetingswere unofficial and did not involve policy makers in either government.However, both governments were kept informed of the talks and, accordingto Haaretz, "The European mediator and the Syrian representative in thediscussions held eight

separate meetings with senior Syrian officials, includingVice President Farouk Shara, Foreign Minister Walid Muallem, and aSyrian intelligence officer with the rank of general.'"39 The two sidesreached an agreement calling for Israel to return to the June 4, 1967, borderbetween the two countries. In return, Syria would stop supporting Hamasand Hezbollah, and even "distance itself from Iran." The talks ended whenthe Syrians proposed that they be moved from an "academic level" to an "officiallevel," and the Olmert government refused.

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Then, in April 2007, Speaker of the House Pelosi visited President Assadin Damascus and told him that Olmert, with whom she had previously metin Israel, "is ready to restart negotiations as well as to talk peace."4 0 Pelosihad misunderstood Olmert's position, however, and the Israeli governmentlet her know in no uncertain terms that he had no interest in talking withSyria, which the official statement denounced as "part of the axis of evil anda force that encourages terror in the entire Middle East."4 1

Olmert's position on the Golan Heights could always change, of course.Indeed, there were press reports in early June 2007 that he might be willingto open negotiations with the Syrians, although Shimon Peres, then vicepremier, immediately threw cold water on the idea by claiming that Syriawas not ready for serious talks.4 2 It is also possible that some future Israelileader might be willing, as Yitzhak Rabin was, to return the disputed territoryin exchange for peace. Our argument is not that Israel will forever refuseto give up the Golan Heights, but instead that Israeli policy toward

Damascus, whatever it might be, largely determines U.S. policy towardSyria, not the other way around.

Given Israel's strong opposition to negotiating with Syria since ArielSharon came to power in February 2001, it is hardly surprising that the Bushadministration, which came to power a month earlier, has gone to considerablelengths during this same time period to isolate and put pressure on theAssad government. Some might say that this analysis misses the crucialpoint that Syria continues to support terrorist organizations like Hamas andHezbollah, and thus fully merits being treated as a rogue state by PresidentBush. But remember: none of those terrorist groups threatens vital U.S. interests,and Damascus backs them mainly because they are the only leversit has to pressure Israel into returning the Golan Heights. Israel could endSyria's ties to Hamas and Hezbollah by agreeing to make peace with Syria,which is why Israeli leaders negotiated with Syria during the 1990s, eventhough Damascus supported terrorism then as it does now.

As noted, there has been significant resistance inside the U.S. governmentto treating Syria as an implacable foe. The CIA and the State Departmenthave been especially vocal in making the case that confrontation withDamascus is strategically unwise. Israel and the lobby have taken the oppositeposition, however, and they have ultimately carried the day with PresidentBush. Let us look in more detail at the evolution of U.S. policy towardSyria since 9/11.

JERUSALEM AND DAMASCUS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

From the outset, Prime Minister Sharon and his lieutenants made it clear tothe Bush administration that they viewed Syria as a dangerous threat to theUnited States as well as Israel.4 3 They did not push Washington to focus onSyria before March 2003, however, mainly because they were more concernedabout Iran, and they were pushing for war against Iraq and did notwant Washington to get distracted by other problems. As soon as Baghdadfell in mid-April 2003, Israeli leaders began urging the United States toconcentrateon Damascus and to use its unmatched power to change theregime's behavior, or perhaps the regime itself.4 4

Sharon laid out his demands in a high-profile interview on April 15,2003. In Yedioth Ahronoth, the prime minister said that Syrian President Assad"is dangerous. His judgment is impaired," and he claimed that Assad hadallowed Saddam to move military equipment into Syria just before the Iraqwar began. Sharon called for the United States to put "very heavy" pressureon Syria, in order to force Assad to

end its support for Hamas and Islamic Jihad,push Iran's Revolutionary Guards out of the Bekka valley in Lebanon,cease cooperating with Iran, remove Hezbollah from the Israeli-Lebaneseborder and replace it with the Lebanese army, and eliminate Hezbollah'smissiles aimed at Israel.4 5 On seeing this remarkably bold request, one highrankingIsraeli diplomat warned that Sharon should adopt a lower profilewith regard to offering his advice about relations between Damascus andWashington.4 6

But Sharon was not the only high-level Israeli official asking the Bushadministrationto get tough with Syria. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz toldMa'ariv on April 14, "We have a long list of issues that we are thinking ofdemandingof the Syrians and it is appropriate that it should be done throughthe Americans."4 7 Specifically, he wanted Syria to stop all assistance toHamas and Islamic Jihad and to dismantle Hezbollah. Two weeks later,Sharon's national security adviser, Ephraim Halevy, came to Washington andencouraged U.S. officials to take what the Forward reporter Ori Nir termed"decisive action" against Syria. In addition to warning about Syria's weaponsof mass destruction, Halevy reportedly described Assad as "irresponsible"and "brash."4 8 Addressing a WINEP conference on May 3, he said Assadwas "prone to bad influence" and warned that he "cannot be left to his oldtricks." Instead, Halevy emphasized, "There are many measures short of warthat can be employed to draw the fangs of the young, arrogant, and inexperienced

president of Syria."4 9

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With Saddam gone, Israel was trying to convince the Bush administrationthat Syria was at least as dangerous as Iraq, maybe even more so. The claim isabsurd if one looks even briefly at Syria's capabilities—it is, after all, a countrywith fewer than nineteen million people and a defense budget that is 1/300ththat of the United States. Yet the Israeli strategist Yossi Alpher now warnedthat, from Israel's perspective, "Syria could do a lot of damage, a lot more thanIraq." The Washington Post reported in mid-April 2003 that Sharon and Mofazwere fueling the campaign against Syria by feeding the United States intelligencereports about the actions of Syrian President Assad.5 0

In their efforts to demonize Syria and bait the United States into ratchetingup the pressure, Israel accused Damascus of harboring high-levelIraqis from Saddam's regime and, even worse, of hiding Iraq's weapons ofmass destruction.51 In August 2003, when a suicide truck bomber blew upUN headquarters in Baghdad, Israel's ambassador to the UN caused a diplomaticspat by suggesting that Syria had provided the truck, in effect implyingthat Syria was partly responsible.5 2 In much the same vein, ItamarRabinovich, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States, told SeymourHersh that he "wondered . . . whether, given the quality of theirsources, the Syrians had had advance information about the September11th plot—and failed to warn the United States."5 3 There was little or no evidenceto support these alarming charges, but Israel's willingness to makethem shows how eager it was to get the United States embroiled with anotherArab regime.

THE LOBBY AND DAMASCUS AFTER 9/11

It is worth recalling that some important figures in the lobby had their sightson Syria well before the Twin Towers fell. Damascus was a prominent targetin the 1996 "Clean Break" study written by a handful of neoconservativesfor incoming Prime Minister Netanyahu. In addition, Daniel Pipes and ZiadAbdelnour, the head of the U.S. Committee for a Free Lebanon (USCFL),had coauthored a report in May 2000 calling for the United States to usemilitary threats to force Syria to remove its troops from Lebanon, get rid ofits WMD, and stop supporting terrorism.54 The USCFL is a close cousin tothe lobby; numerous neoconservatives are among its major activists and supporters,including Elliott Abrams, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, and

DavidWurmser. In fact, all of them signed the 2000 report, as did pro-Israel CongressmanEliot Engel (D-NY), another core USCFL supporter.55

This proposal, and others like it, did not gain much traction in Washingtonduring the Clinton years, mainly because Israel was committed toachieving peace with Syria during that period. Apart from these hard-liners,most groups in the lobby had little incentive to challenge Clinton's policytoward Syria, because the president's approach tended to mirror Israel's. Butwhen Sharon came to power in 2001, Israel's thinking about Syria changeddramatically. Reacting to this shift, a number of groups in the lobby began topress for a more aggressive policy toward Damascus.

In the spring of 2002, when Iraq was becoming the main issue, theAmerican Israel Public Affairs Committee was also promoting legislation toformally place Syria on the "axis of evil" and Congressman Engel introducedthe Syria Accountability Act in Congress.5 6 It threatened sanctions againstSyria if it did not withdraw from Lebanon, give up its WMD, and stop supportingterrorism.57 The proposed act also called for Syria and Lebanon totake concrete steps to make peace with Israel. This legislation was stronglyendorsed by a number of groups in the lobby—especially AI PAC—and"framed," according to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "by some of Israel'sbest friends in Congress." JTA also reported that its "most avid proponent inthe administration" was Elliott Abrams, who, as we have seen, is in frequentcontact with Olmert's office.5 8

The Bush administration opposed the Syria Accountability Act in the

spring of 2002, in part because it feared that the legislation might undermineefforts to sell the Iraq war, and in part because it might lead Damascusto stop providing Washington with useful intelligence about al Qaeda. Congressagreed to put the legislation on the back burner until matters weresettled with Saddam.

But as soon as Baghdad fell in April 2003, the lobby renewed its campaignagainst Syria. Encouraged by what then looked like a decisive victoryin Iraq, some of Israel's backers were no longer interested in simply gettingSyria to change its behavior. Instead, they now wanted to topple the regimeitself. Paul Wolfowitz declared that "there has got to be regime change inSyria," and Richard Perle told a journalist that "we could deliver a short message,a two-worded message [to other hostile regimes in the Middle East]:'You're next.'"5 9 The hawkish Defense Policy Board, which was headed byPerle and whose members included Kenneth Adelman, Eliot Cohen, andJames Woolsey, was also advocating a hard line against Syria.6 0

In addition to Abrams, Perle, and Wolfowitz, the other key insider pushingfor regime change in Syria was Assistant Secretary of State (and later UNAmbassador) John Bolton. He had told Israeli leaders a month before the

Iraq war that President Bush would deal with Syria, as well as Iran andNorth Korea, right after Saddam fell from power.6 1 Toward that end, Boltonreportedly prepared to tell Congress in mid-July that Syria's WM D programshad reached the point where they were a serious threat to stability in theMiddle East and had to be dealt with sooner rather than later. The CIA andother government agencies objected, however, and claimed that Bolton wasinflating the danger. Consequently, the administration did not allow Boltonto give his testimony on Syria at that time.6 2 Yet Bolton was not put off forlong. He appeared before Congress in September 2003 and described Syriaas a growing threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East.6 3

In early April, WINEP released a bipartisan report stating that Syria"should not miss the message that countries that pursue Saddam's reckless,irresponsible and défiant behavior could end up sharing his fate."6 4 On April15, the Israeli-American journalist Yossi Klein Halevi wrote a piece in theLos Angeles Times titled "Next, Turn the Screws on Syria," while that sameday neoconservative Frank Gaffney, the head of the Center for Security Policy,wrote in the Washington Times that the Bush administration should use"whatever techniques are necessary—

including military force—to effect behaviormodification and/or regime change in Damascus."6 5 The next day ZevChafets, an Israeli-American journalist and former head of the Israeli governmentpress office, wrote an article for the New York Daily News titled"Terror-Friendly Syria Needs a Change, Too." Not to be outdone, LawrenceKaplan wrote in the New Republic on April 21 that Syrian leader Assad wasa serious threat to America.6 6

The charges leveled against Syria were remarkably similar to those previouslymade against Saddam. Writing in National Review Online, conservativecommentator Jed Babbin maintained that even though Assad's army wasa paper tiger, he is still "an exceedingly dangerous man." The basis for thatclaim was an "Israeli source" who had told Babbin that "Israel's military andintelligence arms are convinced that Assad will take risks a prudent leaderwouldn't" and, therefore, "Assad's unpredictability is itself a great danger."67Marc Ginsberg, former U.S. ambassador to Morocco, warned of "Syria's secretproduction of weapons of mass destruction and its weaponization ofmissile batteries and rockets."6 8 And like their Israeli counterparts, Americansupporters of Israel suggested that Syria was hiding Saddam's WMD. "Itwouldn't surprise me," Congressman Engel remarked, "if those weapons ofmass destruction that we cannot find in Iraq wound up and are today inSyria."69

Back on Capitol Hill, Engel reintroduced the Syria Accountability Act on

April 12.7 0 Three days later, Richard Perle called for Congress to pass it.71

But the Bush administration still had little enthusiasm for the legislationand was able to stall it again. In mid-August, Engel and a group of politiciansand Jewish leaders from New York traveled to Israel and met for ninety minuteswith Ariel Sharon in his Jerusalem office. The Israeli leader complainedto his visitors that the United States was not putting enough pressure onSyria, although he specifically thanked Engel for sponsoring the SyriaAccountabilityAct and made it clear that he strongly favored continued effortsto push the legislation on Capitol Hill.7 2 The following month, Engel, whoannounced he was "fed up with the . . . administration s maneuvering onSyria," began pushing the bill again. With AIPAC's full support, Engel beganrounding up votes on Capitol Hill.7 3 Bush could no longer hold Congressback in the face of this full-court press from the lobby, and the anti-Syrianact passed by overwhelming margins (398-4 in the House; 89-4 in the Senate).Bush signed it into law on December 12, 2003.7 4

WHY DID BUSH WAVER?

Although Congress had voted overwhelmingly to turn the screws on Syria,the Bush administration was deeply divided about the wisdom of this policy.While neoconservatives like Perle, Bolton, and Wolfowitz were eager topick a fight with Damascus, there was widespread opposition to that approachinside the State Department and the CIA.7 5 Even the president hadlittle enthusiasm for directly confronting Syria, as reflected in the JewishTelegraphic Agency's description of his signing of the Syria AccountabilityAct: "Bush signed the act on a Friday night, the time the administration reservesfor activities it would rather not share with the public, and the WhiteHouse statement on the subject was about as Tve gotta do this but I don'twanna' as it gets."7 6 Even after signing the law, Bush emphasized that hewould go slowly in implementing it.7 7

Bush had good reasons to be ambivalent. As noted, the Syrian governmenthad provided the United States with important intelligence about alQaeda since 9/11, and it had also warned Washington about a planned terroristattack in the Gulf.7 8 Moreover, Syria gave CIA interrogators access toMohammed Zammar, the alleged recruiter of some of the 9/11 hijackers.Flynt Leverett, who worked for Bush in the White House at the time, writesthat the president, "in his communications with Bashar, whether by letter orphone, always acknowledged Syria's cooperation with the United States

TAKING AIM AT SYRIA

against al-Qaeda."7 9 Targeting the Assad regime would jeopardize thesevaluable connections and undermine the campaign against international terrorismin general and al Qaeda in particular. The president recognized thata confrontational policy toward Syria could put America at risk.

Bush also understood that Syria was not a threat to the United States, eventaking into account its possible role in helping the Iraqi insurgency. Assad wasactually eager to cooperate with Washington; according to Seymour Hersh, hischief of military intelligence told the administration that Syria would even bewilling to work through back channels to discuss ways of restricting the militaryand political activities of Hezbollah.8 0 Playing hardball with Assad wouldmake the United States look like a bully with an insatiable appetite for beatingup Arab states. And putting Syria on the American hit list would give Damascuscompelling reasons to cause trouble in Iraq and keep the U.S. militarypinned down there, so that it could not strike Syria. Even if the presidentwanted to pressure Syria, it made good sense to finish the job in Iraq first.

The neoconservatives in the administration were naturally opposed to cooperatingwith Syria. They were even unhappy with the intelligence channelthat was providing Washington with important information about al Qaeda."Neoconservatives in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Officeof the Vice President," Leverett writes, "opposed accepting Syrian help, arguingthat it might create a sense of indebtedness to Damascus and inhibit anappropriate American response to a state sponsor of terrorism."81 PresidentBush, however, has shown little interest in this kind of "appropriate response."Indeed, he instructed the Pentagon not to plan for war against Syriain mid-April 2003, when the United States appeared to have just won a dramaticvictory in Iraq and when talk about striking Syria was beginning to fill

the air.8 2 He certainly has not changed his mind on this matter in light ofwhat has happened in Iraq since those heady days. The president has alsobeen slow to implement the Syria Accountability Act, as he promised whenhe signed it, much to the irritation of pro-Israel hard-liners in the UnitedStates. By the spring of 2004, Congressman Engel and some of his colleagueswere so frustrated with Bush over his foot dragging that they threatened tointroducea new and tougher version of the legislation.83

Contrary to Olmert s claims, there have even been scattered reports in themedia over the past few years that the Bush administration might react positivelyif Israel accepted Assad's offer to reopen peace talks. Ze'ev Schiff, for example,wrote in December 2003 that "in the opinion of American sourcesfamiliar with the thinking in the administration, it would have responded positivelyto an Israeli acceptance of Assad's proposal. The United States is not

looking in principle for a military confrontation with Damascus and is ready tolet Assad get onto a positive track."8 4 A month later, Aluf Benn wrote inHaaretz that "senior American officials" had told the Israelis that the UnitedStates "will not object, should Israel choose to take up Syrian President BasharAssad's offer to resume negotiations." Benn noted, however, that "Israel hasreceivedcontradictory advice from lower-level administration officials."85 Therehave also been other reports saying that Washington was opposed to Israeltalking with Syria.8 6 The Bush administration's bottom line is difficult todiscern,due to the continuing tug-of-war among policy makers over how best todeal with Damascus and a recognition of competing interests.

Although Bush has not taken serious measures to topple Assad, thelobby has pushed him to take a more confrontational line toward Syria thanhe would probably have adopted on his own.8 7 The president and his key advisershave consistently used harsh rhetoric or made veiled threats whentalking about Damascus, and they have repeatedly charged Syria with supportingthe insurgents in Iraq. They have also been quick to blame Syria anytimethere is trouble in Lebanon, and Bush has made no attempt to forge apragmatic relationship with Syria or to mend fences with it. Neoconservativesinside and outside the administration have continued to call for usingmilitary force against Assad's regime. Such calls were especially evident duringthe Lebanon war in the summer of 2006.8 8

Meyrav Wurmser, who runsthe Center for Middle East Policy at the Hudson Institute, commented afterthe war that there was much anger toward Israel among her neoconservativecolleagues "over the fact that Israel did not fight against the Syrians.Instead of Israel fighting against Hizbullah, many parts of the Americanadministrationbelieve that Israel should have fought against the real enemy,which is Syria and not Hizbullah."8 9

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, Washington's confrontational approach toward Damascus hasproduced nothing but negative consequences for the United States and underminedIsrael's long-term interests too. To begin with, Syria has stoppedproviding Washington with intelligence about al Qaeda.9 0 Assad has done littleto help the United States shut down the insurgency in Iraq and may be tryingto protect his own position by helping to keep it going.91 After all, keepingthe United States bogged down in Baghdad makes it less likely that the UnitedStates will be free to go after Syria. Damascus also has continued to support

Hezbollah in Lebanon and has formed a tacit alliance with Iran, which makesit harder to maintain peace in Lebanon and to discourage Iran from pursuingnuclear weapons. Although these developments are not good for the UnitedStates, hard-liners in the lobby remain committed to a policy of confrontationand are quick to criticize anyone who suggests a different course.

Yet in the wake of Israel's debacle in Lebanon last summer, and especiallygiven the disastrous situation facing the United States in Iraq, significantpressure is now being put on President Bush to extend an olive branchto Syria.9 2 The hope is that Damascus might help stabilize the situation inIraq, allow American troops to be withdrawn, and establish some semblanceof order there. It also might be possible to peel Syria away from its alliancewith Iran and weaken Hezbollah in the process. As noted, a number of senatorsand representatives—including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi—have defied the Bush administration and traveled to Damascus to meet withPresident Assad. Their aim is to improve relations between Syria and theUnited States, as recommended by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, whichwould make it easier to address a number of regional security issues.

But Israeli leaders—who appear determined to hold on to the GolanHeights—have no interest in seeing the United States establish cooperativerelations with Syria.9 3 The most powerful groups in the lobby share Israel'sperspective, and they have worked hard—and thus far successfully—tokeep the Bush administration from pursuing a more cooperative relationshipwith the Assad regime. The result is that the United States continues topursue a strategically foolish policy toward Syria and will in all likelihoodcontinue to do so until Israel gets a prime minister like Yitzhak Rabin,who understood that exchanging the Golan Heights for peace with Syriawould leave Israel in a substantially better strategic position.

The story here is a simple one: without the lobby's influence, there wouldhave been no Syria Accountability Act and U.S. policy toward Damascus wouldhave been more in line with the American national interest. One could add thata different U.S. policy might well have produced a Syrian-Israeli peace treatyby now, a treaty that would have further enshrined Israel's legitimacy and regionalsupremacy and reduced international support for its most determined,recalcitrant, and violent foes: Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic Jihad.

America's misguided approach to Syria is not the only case where thelobby has insisted on a counterproductive policy of confrontation, to thedetriment of the United States and Israel alike. One sees much the samestory in recent U.S. policy toward Iran, which is the subject of the nextchapter.

10

IRAN IN THE CROSSHAIRS

The United States and Iran have had an adversarial relationship ever sincethe 1979 revolution established the Islamic Republic. Given past U.S. interferencein Iran—most notably the 1953 coup that restored Mohammad RezaShah Pahlavi to power—and the new regime s support for various radicalgroups, it is hardly surprising that the two states have remained suspicious ofone another and only occasionally engaged in limited acts of cooperation.

Iran is a more serious strategic challenge for the United States and Israelthan is Syria. Both Damascus and Tehran support Hezbollah, Hamas, andIslamic Jihad, and both are enemies of al Qaeda. Each has chemicalweapons and might have biological weapons, although the evidence for thelatter is not conclusive. But there are three fundamental differences betweenIran and Syria.

First, Iran is seeking to master the full nuclear fuel cycle, which wouldallow it to build nuclear weapons if it so chose. It is also developing missilesthat could deliver nuclear warheads against its neighbors, including Israel.1This is why Israelis often refer to Iran as an "existential" threat. Iran will notbe able to strike the American homeland with nuclear missiles anytimesoon, but any weapons it might develop could be used against U.S. forcesstationed in the Middle East, or against European countries.

Second, some Iranian leaders—and especially current President MahmoudAhmadinejad—have made deeply disturbing remarks questioningboth the occurrence of the Holocaust and Israels right to exist. AlthoughAhmadinejad's call for Israel to "vanish from the page of time" (or to be

"erased from the pages of history") is often mistranslated as a call for Israel'sphysical destruction (i.e., to "wipe Israel off the map"), it was still an out

rageous assertion that was bound to be profoundly troubling to Israelisand many others.2 Iran's sponsorship of a conference on the Holocaust inDecember 2006, which featured prominent Holocaust deniers and otherdiscredited extremists, merely reinforced global concerns about Iran's intentions.

Third, Iran is the most powerful Islamic state in the Persian Gulf and hasthe potential to dominate that oil-rich area.3 This is especially true in lightof what has happened to Iraq since America invaded in March 2003. Iraqhad been Iran's principal rival in the region, but it is now a divided andwartorn society and is in no position to check Iran. Iran has links to severalof the dominant Shia factions in Iraq, giving it far more influence over Iraq'sevolution than it possessed when Saddam Hussein ruled in Baghdad. Thisdramatic shift in the regional balance of power explains why some believethat "Iran looks like the winner of the Iraq War."4 Of course, Iran's poweradvantageover its neighbors would be even more pronounced if it acquired anuclear arsenal.

Iran's growing power is not good for the United States, which has longsought to prevent any one country from establishing hegemony in the PersianGulf. This basic principle explains why the Reagan administration backedSaddam in the 1980s, when it looked like Iran might defeat Iraq in theirbloody war. The United States also has strong incentives to prevent Iran fromgetting nuclear weapons. Israel is equally averse to seeing Iran dominate theGulf, because a regional powerhouse of that sort could be a long-term strategicthreat. The prospect of a nuclear Iran is even more worrisome for Israelileaders, who tend to view it as the ultimate nightmare scenario.

But Israel is not the only Middle East country that is now worried aboutIran. Many of Iran's Arab neighbors are also concerned about its nuclear ambitionsas well as its growing influence in the region. They fear that an especiallypowerful Iran might someday try to coerce them or even invade theircountry, as Saddam invaded Kuwait in August 1990. They are also somewhatsuspicious of Iran because it is a Persian rather than an Arab state,and because they care about the balance of power within Islam betweenShia and Sunnis. Iran is governed by deeply committed Shia, which alarmsthe leaders of Sunni-dominated

states like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and theUnited Arab Emirates, who see Shia influence growing in the Arab world.For the first time, Shia govern Iraq, and Hezbollah, a Shia organization, hasgained greater influence in Lebanon in the wake of its 2006 war with Israel.To make matters worse, Tehran has close ties with some Iraqi leaders and isa longtime supporter of Hezbollah.

The United States, Israel, and Iran's Arab neighbors, including many ofAmerica's Gulf allies, have an independent interest in keeping Iran nonnuclearand preventing it from becoming a regional hegemon. Washingtonwould be committed to keeping Iran in check even if Israel did not exist, soas to prevent the other Gulf states from being conquered or cowed byTehran. Unqualified support from the Arab world would make it easier forthe United States to preserve the balance of power in the Gulf, and obtainingthat support requires an effective strategy.

Over the past fifteen years, Israel and the lobby have pushed the UnitedStates to pursue a strategically unwise policy toward Iran. In particular, theyare the central forces today behind all the talk in the Bush administrationand on Capitol Hill about using military force to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities.Unfortunately, such rhetoric makes it harder, not easier, to stop Iranfrom going nuclear. During the 1990s, Israel and its American supportersencouraged the Clinton administration to pursue a confrontational policytoward Iran, even though Iran was interested in improving relations between

the two countries. That same pattern was at play again in the early years ofthe Bush administration, as well as in December 2006, when Israel and thelobby made a concerted effort to undermine the Iraq Study Group's recommendationthat President Bush negotiate with Iran. Were it not for thelobby, the United States would almost certainly have a different and moreeffective Iran policy.

U.S. efforts to deal with Iran are further undermined by Israel's repressivepolicies in the Occupied Territories, which make it harder for theUnited States to gain the cooperation of Arab countries. Indeed, one of themain reasons that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice finally began pushingforward the Arab-Israeli peace process in late 2006 was Saudi Arabia'sinsistence that it could not fashion an effective Iran policy with Washingtonas long as there was so much anger toward the United States in the Arabworld over the Palestinian issue. As discussed in Chapter 7, Rice's efforts arelikely to fail, because Israel's current leaders do not want to create a viablePalestinian state and the lobby will make it very difficult for President Bushor any other president to get Israel to change its approach to this issue. Inshort, thanks in good part to Israel and its American backers, the UnitedStates has pursued a counterproductive policy toward Iran since the early1990s and is having difficulty getting support from states that have theirown reasons to help Washington deal with Iran and would otherwise be inclinedto do so.

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CONFRONTATION OR CONCILIATION?

The United States had excellent relations with Iran from 1953 until 1979,when the American-backed shah was toppled and Ayatollah Khomeini andhis Islamic theocracy came to power. Since then, relations between the twocountries have been almost entirely adversarial. Israel has also had hostilerelations with Tehran since the shahs overthrow. During the 1980s, however,neither the United States nor Israel was seriously threatened by Iran,mainly because it was involved in a lengthy war with Iraq, which pinned itdown and sapped its strength. To preserve the regional balance of power, theUnited States simply had to make sure that the war ended in a stalemate. Itaccomplished this objective by helping Saddam Husseins forces stymieIran's army on the battlefield. Iran was exhausted when the war ended in1988, and it was in no position to cause trouble in the region for at least afew years. Furthermore, Iran's nuclear program was put on the back burnerduring the 1980s, possibly because of the war.

Israel's perception of the Iranian threat underwent a fundamentalchange in the early 1990s, as evidence of Tehran's nuclear ambitions beganto accumulate. Israeli leaders began warning Washington in 1993 that Iranwas a grave threat not only to Israel but to the United States as well. Therehas been no letup in that alarmist and aggressive rhetoric since then, largelybecause Iran has continued to move ahead on the nuclear front. Today,many experts believe the Iranians will eventually build nuclear weapons unlesssomething is done to topple the clerical regime, alter its ambitions, ordeny it the capacity. The lobby has followed Israel's lead and echoed itswarnings about the dangers of allowing Iran to become a nuclear power.

Israel and the lobby are also troubled by Iran's support for Hezbollah, byits endorsement of the Palestinian cause, and by its refusal to accept Israel'sright to exist. Needless to say, statements like President Ahmadinejad's reinforcethese concerns. Israel and its supporters tend to see Iran's policies asa reflection of deep ideological antipathy to the Jewish state, but they aremore accurately seen as tactical measures intended to improve Iran's overallposition in the region. In particular, endorsing the Palestinian cause (andhelping groups like Hezbollah) wins sympathy in the Arab world and helpsdiscourage an Arab alliance against Persian Iran. As the Iran expert Trita Parsiconvincingly shows, Iran's commitment to Hezbollah and to the Palestinianshas varied considerably over time, usually in response to the overall threatenvironment. Relations between the clerical regime in Iran and the largely

secular PLO were not warm during the 1980s, and Iran began backing hardline

Palestinian groups like Islamic Jihad only after its exclusion from the1991 Madrid Conference and the onset of the Oslo peace process. Theseevents led Tehran to resist what it correctly saw as a broad U.S. effort to isolateit and deny it a significant regional role, and it did so by backing extremistgroups that also opposed Oslo. As Martin Indyk, who played a key role informulating U.S. policy at the time, later recalled, Iran "had an incentive todo us in on the peace process in order to defeat our policy of containmentand isolation. And therefore, they took aim at the peace process."5

There are two broad alternatives for dealing with Iran's nuclear programand its regional ambitions. One approach, which is favored by the Israeligovernment and its key American supporters, proceeds from the belief thatIran cannot be contained once it acquires nuclear weapons. This view assumesthat Tehran is likely to use its nuclear weapons against Israel, becauseIranian leaders, with their apocalyptic vision of history, would not fearIsraeli retaliation.6 They might give nuclear weapons to terrorists or usethem against the United States themselves, even if doing so invited automaticand massive retaliation. Therefore, Iran cannot be allowed to acquirea nuclear arsenal. Israel would like Washington to solve this problem, but Israelileaders do not rule out the possibility that the Israel Defense Forcesmight try to do the job if the Americans get cold feet.

This approach also assumes that conciliatory diplomacy and positive incentiveswill not convince Iran to abandon its nuclear program. In concreteterms, this means that the United States has to impose sanctions on Iran—and maybe even conduct a preventive war —if it continues down the nuclearroad. To facilitate putting serious pressure on Iran, Israelis and the lobby wantthe United States to maintain a substantial American military presence in theMiddle East, in contrast to America's pre-1990 strategy of acting as an offshorebalancer and keeping its military forces over the horizon.

For the past fifteen years, this confrontational formula for dealing withIran's nuclear program has vied with a second strategy, one more consistentwith the American national interest. This alternative approach asserts thatwhile it would be better for the United States if Iran did not acquire nuclearweapons, there is good reason to think a nuclear Iran could be containedand deterred, just as the Soviet Union was contained during the Cold War.7It also argues that the best way to stop Iran from building nuclear weaponsis to engage it diplomatically and attempt to normalize its relationship withthe United States. This strategy requires taking the threat of preventive

waroff the table, because threatening Iran with regime change simply gives its

leaders even more reason to want a nuclear deterrent of their own. The Iranians,like the Americans and the Israelis, recognize that nuclear weaponsare the best protection available for a state that is on another state's hit list.As the Iran expert Ray Takeyh of the Council on Foreign Relations has written,"Iran's nuclear calculations are not derived from an irrational ideology,but rather from a judicious attempt to craft a viable deterrent capabilityagainst an evolving range of threats . . . Iran's leadership clearly sees itself asbeing in Washington's cross hairs, and it is precisely this perception that isdriving its accelerated nuclear program."8

The case for engagement is buttressed by the fact that preventive warlooks like a very unattractive alternative. Even if the United States couldeliminate Iran's nuclear facilities, Tehran would almost certainly rebuildthem, and this time the Iranians would go to even greater lengths to disperse,hide, and harden them against an attack.9 Also, if Washington launcheda preventive strike against Iran, Tehran would be bound to retaliate whereverand whenever it could, including going after oil shipments in the PersianGulf and using its considerable influence to make matters worse for theUnited States in Iraq. Additionally, Iran would be likely to establish closerties with China and Russia, which is not in America's interest. By contrast,if the United States were to remove the threat of war and engage Iran, thenTehran would be more inclined to help Washington deal with al Qaeda,tamp down the war inside Iraq, and stabilize Afghanistan. It would also beless likely to align with China and Russia.1 0

Given the history of poisonous relations between America and Iran,

there is no guarantee that engagement would produce a "grand bargain" thatwould halt Iran's nuclear program. After all, there is little chance that Israelwill give up its own nuclear weapons, and Iranian leaders might believe thatif Israel has a nuclear deterrent, then so must Iran. Nonetheless, this approachis more likely to work than threatening preventive war, and if it doesfail, the United States can always fall back on deterrence.

One might have expected the United States to have adopted some variationon the engagement strategy by this time, especially given that a decadeand a half of confrontation has not borne fruit. Engagement enjoys substantialsupport in the CIA, the State Department, and even the U.S. military,which has shown little enthusiasm for bombing Iran's nuclear facilities.London's Sunday Times reported in late February 2007 that "some of America'smost senior military commanders are prepared to resign if the WhiteHouse orders a military strike against Iran, according to highly placed defenseand intelligence sources."1 1 In fact, Iran has repeatedly signaled an in

terest in engagement: its leaders have reached out to the United States on anumber of occasions over the past fifteen years, hoping to improve relationsbetween the two countries. Remarkably, Iran has even offered to put its nuclearprogram up for negotiation and offered to work out a modus vivendiwith Israel.

Yet despite these promising opportunities, Israel and the lobby haveworked overtime to prevent both the Clinton and Bush administrations fromengaging Iran, and they have prevailed at almost every turn. Unfortunately,but predictably, this hard-line approach has not worked as advertised andhas left the United States worse off than if it had pursued a strategy ofengagement.In response to this failed strategy, there is a growing chorus ofvoices inside and outside of Washington calling for a new opening towardIran. Equally unsurprising, Israel and the lobby are fighting to prevent theUnited States from reversing course and seeking a rapprochement with Tehran.They continue to promote an increasingly confrontational and counterproductivepolicy instead.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION AND DUAL CONTAINMENT

In early 1993, just as the Clinton administration was coming to power, IsraeliPrime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and his foreign minister, Shimon Peres,started claiming that Iran was a growing threat to both Israel and the UnitedStates. Israeli leaders portrayed Iran as a

dangerous adversary in part becausethey saw it as a way of fostering closer relations between Jerusalemand Washington now that the Soviet threat had disappeared. The hope wasthat the United States would see Israel as a bulwark against Iranian expansionism,much the way Israel had been treated as a bulwark against Sovietinfluence in the Middle East. Israel was also justifiably concerned aboutIran's renewed interest in developing a sophisticated nuclear program.12 TheWashington Post reported in mid-March 1993 that "across the Israeli politicalspectrum, there is a conviction that American public opinion and politicalleaders need to be further convinced of the urgency of restraining Iran,and that the United States is the only global power capable of doing so."1 3

The Clinton administration responded to Israel's entreaties by adoptingthe policy of dual containment, as we have discussed. Not only was the policyfirst enunciated at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy by MartinIndyk, but Robert Pelletreau, the assistant secretary of state for Near Easternaffairs at the time, told Trita Parsi that the policy was essentially a copy of an

Israeli proposal.14 Kenneth Pollack of Brookings's Saban Center also notesthat "Jerusalem was one of the few places on Earth where dual containmentwas not regularly misunderstood."15 The new policy called for the UnitedStates to abandon its traditional strategy of acting as an offshore balancer inthe Persian Gulf and instead station a substantial number of troops in Kuwait

and Saudi Arabia for the purpose of containing both Iran and Iraq. In fact,the policy was designed to do more than just contain Iran; it also aimed tocause "dramatic changes in Iran's behavior." Among its goals was forcing Iranto stop supporting terrorists and to abandon its nuclear program.1 6

Israel's concerns notwithstanding, there was no good reason for theUnited States to adopt a hard-line policy toward Iran in the early 1990s. Ifanything, just the opposite was the case. Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, whobecame Iran's president in 1989, was committed to improving relations withWashington, and Iran, which had recently suffered through a devastatingwar with Iraq, was hardly a military threat to the United States. In the early1990s, in fact, American leaders were much more concerned about SaddamHussein, against whom the United States had just fought a war.1 7 Plus,Iran's nuclear program had barely gotten off the ground in 1993. Few voicesin Washington were calling for tougher policies against Iran before Israel beganclamoring for a more confrontational policy, and dual containment waswidely criticized when it was first announced.1 8

By the mid-1990s, there was growing dissatisfaction with dual containment,because it forced the United States to maintain hostile relations withtwo countries that disliked each other intensely, and it left Washingtonpretty much alone to handle the demanding task of keeping them in line.Consequently, pressure began to build in the United States to think aboutengaging Iran rather than confronting it.1 9 At the same time, however, Rabinwas under pressure in Israel to get the Clinton administration to toughen upthe policy.2 0 Rabin's critics felt that dual containment had no real teeth becauseit had done little to stop the substantial economic intercoursebetween Iran and the United States. Israel and the lobby, especially theAmerican Israel Public Affairs Committee, mobilized to save dual containmentand to close the loopholes that allowed American companies to tradeand invest in Iran. In mid-1994, Parsi reports, "At the behest of the Israeligovernment, AIPAC drafted and circulated a 74-page paper in Washingtonarguing that Iran was not only a threat to Israel, but also to the United Statesand the West."2 1 According to Pollack, "The right, AIPAC, the Israelis wereall screaming for new sanctions [on Iran]."2 2 The Clinton administrationwas willing to go along, largely because it was focusing on the Oslo peace

process and wanted to make sure that Israel felt secure and that Iran, a potentialspoiler, did not derail the process.

AI PAC laid out its basic game plan in April 1995, when it issued a reporttitled "Comprehensive U.S. Sanctions Against Iran: A Plan for Action."23 Bythat point, however, steps were already being taken to tighten the economicnoose around Iran's neck. Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY)—with, accordingto Pollack, "some help from the Israelis"—introduced legislation in January1995 to end all economic links between the United States and Iran.2 4The Clinton administration opposed the legislation at first and it stalled inCongress.

But two months later, groups in the lobby achieved their first success afterIran chose Conoco, an American oil company, to develop the Sirri oilfields.25 Iran deliberately selected Conoco over several other foreign biddersin order to signal its interest in improving relations with the United States.But this friendly overture went nowhere, because Clinton killed the deal onMarch 14. One day later, he issued an executive order banning Americancompanies from helping Iran develop its oil fields. Clinton later said that"one of the most effective opponents" of the Conoco deal was Edgar BronfmanSr., the powerful former head of the World Jewish Congress.2 6 AIPACalso played a key role in scuttling that deal.2 7

On May 6, the president issued a second executive order banning alltrade and financial investments with Iran, which he labeled an "unusual andextraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy ofthe United States."2 8 Clinton had actually announced that he was going totake that step one week earlier in a speech to the World Jewish Congress.2 9His decision to nix the Conoco deal and issue those two executive orderswas, notes Pollack, "a major demonstration of our support for Israel."3 0Ironically,

although Israel lay behind the American decision to cut economic tiesto Iran, Israel did not pass any laws barring Israeli-Iranian trade and Israeliscontinued to purchase Iranian goods through third parties.3 1

But those executive orders were not enough for the lobby, because executiveorders could be quickly reversed if Clinton ever changed his mind.

A. M. Rosenthal, a strong defender of Israel, made this point in a New YorkTimes column in which he criticized the Conoco deal: "The only problem[with executive orders] is that what the President giveth he can canceleth."3 2 In response to this potential problem, Trita Parsi reports that "on itsown initiative, AIPAC revised" the bill that Senator D'Amato had introducedin January 1995 "and convinced the New York Senator to reintroduce it in1996—with AIPAC's proposed changes."3 3 The new bill, which eventually

became the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, imposed sanctions on any foreigncompanies investing more than $40 million to develop petroleum resourcesin Iran or Libya. Although the proposed legislation infuriated America's Europeanallies, the House passed it by a vote of 415-0 on June 19, 1996, andthe Senate passed it by unanimous consent one month later. Clinton signedthe bill on August 5, even though there was significant opposition to the newlegislation throughout the administration. Indeed, Kenneth Pollack writesthat "much of the executive branch hated the D'Amato bill. In fact, formany, 'hated' was too mild a word." However, "many of President Clinton'sdomestic policy advisors thought it would be sheer stupidity for the WhiteHouse not to endorse the bill."3 4

Since Clinton was up for reelection in three months, they were probablyright. As Ze'ev Schiff, the military correspondent for Haaretz, noted at thetime, "Israel is but a tiny element in the big scheme, but one should not concludethat it cannot influence those within the beltway."35 Similarly, JamesSchlesinger, who has held a number of cabinet-level positions in differentadministrations, remarked in the wake of these sanctions, "It is scarcely possibleto overstate the influence of Israel's supporters on our policies in theMiddle East."3 6

The Conoco episode casts further doubt on the oft-repeated claim thatthe "oil lobby" is the real hidden hand behind U.S. Middle East policy. Inthis case, an American oil company wanted to deal with Iran,

and Iranwanted to do business with it. The oil industry was opposed to overturningthe Conoco deal, and it also opposed the legislation to impose sanctions onIran.3 7 As noted in Chapter 4, Dick Cheney, a prominent advocate of confrontingIran today, publicly opposed the U.S. sanctions program when hewas president of the oil-services company Halliburton in the 1990s. But oilinterests were steamrolled by AIPAC on every decision. These outcomesprovide more evidence of how little influence the oil companies have on

U.S. Middle East policy, when compared with Israel and the lobby.The American posture continued to harden even as new opportunities forengagement became apparent. On May 23, 1997, Mohammad Khatami waselected president of Iran. He was even more enthusiastic than his predecessorabout improving relations with the West, and the United States in particular.He made conciliatory remarks in his inaugural speech on August 4 andin his first press conference on December 14. Most important, he went outof his way in a lengthy CNN interview on January 7, 1998, to express his respectfor "the great American people" and "their great civilization." He alsomade it clear that Iran did not "aim .. . to destroy or undermine the Ameri

can government" and that he regretted the infamous takeover of the U.S. embassyin 1979. Recognizing the existing hostility between Tehran and Washington,he called for "a crack in this wall of mistrust to prepare for a changeand create an opportunity to study a new situation."38

Furthermore, Khatami did not rule out the possibility of an Israeli statein historic Palestine and declared that "terrorism should be condemned in

all its forms and manifestations." He also denounced terrorism against Israelis,while noting that "supporting peoples who fight for the liberation oftheir land is not, in my opinion, supporting terrorism." This caveatnotwithstanding,Khatami s remarks were still a marked shift in Iran's position, andother Iranian spokesmen soon echoed Iran's willingness to accept Israel if itreached an agreement with the Palestinians.3 9

In the wake of Khatami's conciliatory comments, the Clinton administration—after checking with Israel and key figures in Congress —made a numberof small gestures to improve relations between Iran and the UnitedStates.4 0 Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made contriteremarks about past Western conduct, and the United States eased visa restrictionson travel between the two countries. Even Martin Indyk, the architectof dual containment who was then serving as U.S. ambassador toIsrael, told reporters that "the United States has made it clear repeatedlythat we have nothing against an Islamic government in Iran . . . We areready for a dialogue."41 But the commercial restrictions remained in forceand dual containment continued for the rest of Clinton's second term. Thisfailure to alter course was partly due to hard-liners inside Iran, who werestrongly opposed to Khatami's plans to engage with the "great Satan."4 2 ButIsrael and its supporters in the United States also played an important rolein discouraging an American-Iranian rapprochement.

For starters, the lobby had been largely responsible for developing andsustaining dual containment in the years before Khatami came to power in1997. That policy, of course, helped poison relations between Tehran andWashington, which, in turn, increased the political power of the Iranianpoliticians who opposed Iran's new and more moderate leader. Furthermore,as soon as it became clear in mid-December 1997 that Khatami was callingfor better relations with America, Israeli officials moved to thwart his initiative.Haaretz reported that "Israel has expressed its concern to Washingtonat reports of an impending change of policy by the United States towardsIran," adding that Prime Minister Netanyahu "has asked AIPAC .. . to actvigorously in Congress to prevent such a policy shift.'4 3

AIPAC did as Netanyahu asked. According to Gary Sick, one of Amer

ica's leading experts on Iran, "The gradual improvement of U.S.-

Iran relationsafter the election of Khatami was not reflected in AIPAC s positions. Infact, by early 1999 only AIPAC, the Iranian monarchists in exile and the terroristMojahedin-e Khalq persisted in their relentless insistence that little ornothing had changed in Iran."4 4 Even after the Israeli ambassador to theUnited States had said in the spring of 2000 that it would be acceptable forClinton to allow certain food and medical supplies to be exported to Iran,AIPAC still campaigned against the legislation. AIPAC did not oppose Clinton'sdecision to lift the ban on caviar, Persian rugs, and pistachios importedfrom Iran, but the Anti-Defamation League and the Conference of Presidentsof Major American Jewish Organizations did.4 5 Clinton ultimately gothis way in both cases, mainly because each involved small amounts of tradeand little controversy. But the United States did not make a serious effort tograsp the hand that Khatami had tentatively extended.

It made good sense for the United States to engage Iran during the1990s and attempt to improve relations between the two countries. Dualcontainment, as Brent Scowcroft observed, "was a nutty idea."4 6 Israeli leaders,however, believed that it was in Israel's interest to prevent PresidentClinton from pursuing engagement, even if that more aggressive policywas not in America's national interest. Ephraim Sneh, one of Israel's leadinghawks on Iran, put the point succinctly: "We were against it [UnitedStates-Iran dialogue] . . . because the interest of the US did not coincidewith ours."47 The lobby followed Israel's lead.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND REGIME CHANGE

As discussed in Chapter 8, the attacks on September 11, 2001, led PresidentBush to abandon dual containment and pursue the even more ambitious

strategy of regional transformation. The American military would nowbe used to topple hostile regimes across the Middle East. From Israel's perspective,Iran was ideally suited to be the first target on the Bush administration'shit list. Since the early 1990s, Israeli leaders have tended to portrayIran as their most dangerous enemy because it is the adversary most likely toacquire nuclear weapons. As Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezerremarked one year before the Iraq war, "Iraq is a problem . . . But you shouldunderstand, if you ask me, today Iran is more dangerous than Iraq."4 8

Nevertheless, Sharon and his lieutenants recognized by early 2002 thatthe United States was determined to confront Iraq first and deal with Iran

after Saddam had been removed from power. They raised no serious objectionsto this ordering of the agenda, although they kept reminding the Bushadministration that it had to deal with Iran as soon as it finished the job inBaghdad. Sharon began publicly pushing the United States to confront Iranin November 2002, in an interview with the Times of London.4 9 DescribingIran as the "center of world terror" and bent on acquiring nuclear weapons,he declared that the Bush administration should put the strong arm on Iran"the day after" it conquered Iraq.

In late April 2003, after the fall of Baghdad, Haaretz reported that the Israeliambassador in Washington was now calling for regime change in Iran.The overthrow of Saddam, he noted, was "not enough." In his words, America"has to follow through. We still have great threats of that magnitude comingfrom Syria, coming from Iran."5 0 Ten days later, the New York Timesreported that Washington was growing increasingly concerned about Iran'snuclear ambitions and that there is "a lot of hammering from the Israelis forus to take this problem seriously."51 Shimon Peres then published an op-edin the Wall Street Journal on June 25 titled "We Must Unite to Prevent anAyatollah Nuke." His description of the Iranian threat sounded just like hisearlier description of the threat from Saddam, even including a ritual referenceto the lessons of appeasement in the 1930s. Iran, he emphasized, mustbe told in no uncertain terms that the United States and Israel will not tolerateit going nuclear.5 2

The neoconservatives also lost no time in making the case for regimechange in Tehran. In late May 2003, Inter Press Service reported that "theneo-cons' efforts to now focus US attention on 'regime change' in Iran havebecome much more intense since early

May and [have] already borne substantialfruit."53 In early June, according to the Forward, "Neoconservativesinside and outside the administration have been urging an active effort topromote regime change in Tehran. Reports of possible covert actions havesurfaced in recent weeks."5 4

As usual, there was a bevy of articles by prominent neoconservatives—essentially the same people who had helped push the war in Iraq—makingthe case for going after Iran. William Kristol wrote in the Weekly Standardon May 12 that "the liberation of Iraq was the first great battle for the futureof the Middle East . . . But the next great battle—not, we hope, a militarybattle—will be for Iran."55 Michael Ledeen, one of the leading hawks onIran, wrote in the National Review Online on April 4, "There is no more timefor diplomatic 'solutions.' We will have to deal with the terror masters, hereand now. Iran, at least, offers us the possibility of a memorable victory, be

cause the Iranian people openly loath the regime, and will enthusiasticallycombat it, if only the United States supports them in their just struggle."56

Other pundits offering similar views at this time include Daniel Pipes ofthe Middle East Forum and WINEP's Patrick Clawson, who published apiece in the Jerusalem Post on May 20 titled "Turn Up the Pressure on Iran."They called for the Bush administration to support the Mojahedin-e Khalq,a group based in Iraq that is bent on overthrowing the regime in Tehran butthat the U.S. government has designated a terrorist organization. Lawrence

Kaplan argued in the New Republic on June 9 that the United States neededto get tougher with Iran over its nuclear programs, which he feared were furtheralong than most American policy makers recognized.5 7

On May 6, the American Enterprise Institute cosponsored an all-dayconference on the future of Iran with two other pro-Israel organizations, theFoundation for the Defense of Democracies and the Hudson Institute.5 8The speakers were all strong supporters of Israel like Bernard Lewis, SenatorSam Brownback, Uri Lubrani (senior adviser to the IDF and former Israeligovernment coordinator for southern Lebanon), Morris Amitay fromthe Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (and former executive directorof AIPAC), Michael Ledeen, Reuel Marc Gerecht from the AEI, andMeyrav Wurmser from the Hudson Institute. The main question on thetable was the obvious one: "What steps can the United States take to promotedemocratization and regime change in Iran?" The answer was predictable:each of the speakers called for the United States to do much moreto bring down the Islamic Republic and replace it with a democratic state.

Toward this end, the lobby has struck up a close relationship with RezaPahlavi, the son of the late shah of Iran. He is believed to have had personalmeetings with both Sharon and Netanyahu, and he has extensive contactswith pro-Israel groups and individuals in the United States. The evolvingrelationshipis much like the one that influential groups in the lobby had previouslycultivated with Iraqi exile Ahmed Chalabi. Seemingly unaware thatPahlavi (like Chalabi) has little legitimacy in his homeland, pro-Israel groupshave promoted his cause. In return, he makes it clear that if he were to cometo power in Iran, he would make sure that his country has friendly relationswith Israel.5 9

On May 19, 2003, Senator Sam Brownback announced that he plannedto introduce legislation to fund opposition groups and promote democracyin Iran. The so-called Iran Democracy Act was backed not only by Iranianexiles but also by AIPAC, JINSA, and the Coalition for Democracy in Iran,whose founders included Morris Amitay of JINSA and Michael Ledeen of

AEI. The bill was introduced in the House by Brad Sherman (D-CA), anotherdedicated supporter of Israel, and by late July it had been passed byboth houses of Congress, although the funding was removed

from the finallegislation.6 0

The groups backing this legislation have emphasized that Iran is a majormenace because it supports terrorism and is close to becoming a nuclearpower. But they also have tried to blame Iran for some of the other problemsthat the United States has faced since the fall of Baghdad. Neoconservativesin the Pentagon suggested that Iran was harboring some of the al Qaeda operativeswho had attacked U.S. and other targets in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, onMay 12, 2003. The Iranians denied this charge, and both the CIA and theState Department viewed the neoconservatives' accusations with considerableskepticism.6 1 The neoconservatives have also been among the mostforceful proponents of the claim that Iran has been supporting attacksagainst American troops in Iraq. As Michael Ledeen wrote in April 2004,"Iraq cannot be peaceful and secure so long as Tehran sends its terroristcadres across the border."62

If Iran is contributing to militias in Iraq, it hardly proves that U.S. andIranian interests are irreconcilable. Iran is not the main source of America'sproblems in Iraq, and the United States would be in deep trouble there evenif Iran were doing nothing. Nor would it be surprising if Iran were acting inthis way. After all, the world's most powerful country has invaded two ofIran's neighbors while simultaneously declaring that Tehran is part of the"axis of evil." The U.S. Congress has passed a law calling for regime changein Iran, and the Bush administration has funded Iranian exile groups andhinted on several occasions that it might strike Iran with military force.Wouldn't any country facing this sort of threat do whatever it could to protectitself, including using its influence with different Iraqi factions andpossibly sending them various forms of aid? If a hostile power conqueredCanada or Mexico and tried to set up a sympathetic government there,

wouldn't the United States try to complicate that hostile power's efforts andensure an outcome more favorable to U.S. interests? Americans have goodreason to resent Iran's influence in Iraq, but they should hardly be surprisedby it or see it as evidence of unremitting Iranian hostility. It is also worthnotingthat deep antipathy did not prevent the U.S. government from engagingSoviet leaders throughout the Cold War, even when Moscow was providingmillions of dollars' worth of military aid to North Vietnam, which used thisassistance to kill thousands of American soldiers.

IRAN IN THE CROSSHAIRS

RISING TO ISRAEL'S DEFENSE

Israel and the lobby have been remarkably successful at convincing Bushand other leading American politicians that a nuclear-armed Iran is an unacceptablethreat to Israel and that it is the responsibility of the United Statesto prevent that threat from increasing. In fact, there is some evidence thatsome individuals in the lobby think they have been too successful for Israel'sown good.

The president's current rhetoric clearly reflects Israel's preferred approachtoward Iran, as is apparent from a speech he gave in Cleveland onMarch 20, 2006. "The threat from Iran," he said, "is, of course, their statedobjective to destroy our strong ally Israel. That's a threat, a serious threat . . .I made it clear, 111 make it clear again, that we will use military might to protectour ally, Israel."6 3 Bush's comments were consistent with his previousstatements. He said a month earlier in an interview with Reuters that "we willrise to Israel's defense, if need be."6 4 Moreover, most of the 2008 presidentialcandidates, Democrats and Republicans alike, appear to agree with the president.In April 2007, for example, Senator John McCain said explicitly thathe agreed with Bush that the United States had a responsibility to protect Israelfrom Iran and to make sure that Iran did not get nuclear weapons thatmight threaten Israel.6 5 He reiterated that claim in a May 2007 interviewwith the Jerusalem Post, and fellow candidates Barack Obama, Mitt Romney,Bill Richardson, and Sam Brownback offered similar comments as well.6 6

Bush's enthusiasm for defining Iran as a mortal threat to Israel but notthe United States, coupled with his stated commitment to go to war againstIran for Israel's benefit, has set off alarm bells in various parts of the lobby.In the spring of 2006, the Forward reported, "Jewish community leadershave urged the White House to refrain from publicly pledging to defend Israelagainst possible Iranian hostilities."

The point is not that these leadersoppose the use of American power to protect Israel, but rather that they fearthat Bush's public statements "create an impression that the United Statesis considering a military option against Iran for the sake of Israel—and couldlead to American Jews being blamed for any negative consequences of anAmerican strike against Iran."6 7 As Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairmanof the Conference of Presidents, put it in April 2006, "As much as weappreciate it, the question is whether it's beneficial to tie this to Israel."6 8

Israeli leaders share the same concern, as reflected in Prime MinisterOlmert's comment later that spring that he hoped pro-Israel groups would

maintain a low profile regarding Iran. "We don't want it to be about Israel,"he said, which was just the opposite of what the president was saying.69

Rhetoric aside, the Bush administration has worked assiduously to shutdown Iran's nuclear program and has in general taken a more aggressive posture.It has imposed economic sanctions and threatened military strikes ifIran continues down the nuclear road. "No option," American leaders arefond of saying, "is off the table."7 0 James Bamford and Seymour Hersh haveseparately described how many of the same individuals who planned theIraq war have devised the Pentagon's plans for a military campaign againstIran. For example, Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense for policyuntil August 2005, played a central role in developing the plans for strikingthe Islamic Republic. "There has also been close, and largely unacknowledged,

cooperation with Israel," noted Hersh in early 2005. "Defense Departmentcivilians, under the leadership of Douglas Feith, have been workingwith Israeli planners and consultants to develop and refine potential nuclear,chemical-weapons, and missile targets inside Iran." The Pentagon has alsobeen conducting intelligence-gathering operations inside of Iran and it hasupdated its "contingency plans for a broader invasion of Iran."71

In January 2007, the Bush administration ratcheted up the military pressureon Iran in a number of ways. It arrested five Iranian officials in the Iraqicity of Erbil, who were in a building that the local Kurds and the Iraniansconsidered a consular facility. The president then announced that he wassending an additional carrier battle group to the Persian Gulf as well as Patriotantimissile defense systems to defend the states in the Gulf CooperationCouncil. At the same time, U.S. military officials in Baghdad wereclaiming that Iran was shipping key components of especially deadly roadsidebombs into Iraq to be used against American troops. Both StephenHadley, the president's national security adviser, and Secretary of StateCondoleezzaRice made it clear that the administration had not ruled out thepossibility that U.S. forces might cross into Iran in pursuit of Iranianstraffickingin roadside bombs and other weapons.7 2

These confrontational moves notwithstanding, David Wurmser, who advisesVice President Cheney on Middle East affairs, apparently felt thatRice and Hadley were too interested in negotiating with Iran —even if thediplomacy was backed up by threats—and not sufficiently committed to themilitary option. In spring 2007, Wurmser gave a series of talks at the AmericanEnterprise Institute and other conservative Washington think tanks inwhich he said that the vice president was unhappy with the secretary of

state—as well as with President Bush—for pursuing diplomacy at all, andthat Cheney was interested in working with Israel to come up with a militarystrategy to eliminate Iran's nuclear program that he could sell to the president.When Wurmser's activities became public knowledge, Rice deniedthat there were differences within the administration on Iran, and emphasizedthat the vice president fully supported the president's policy.7 3

While Washington has relied primarily on threats rather than negotiationsin its dealings with Iran, the European Union has worked in the oppositedirection and has attempted to find a diplomatic

solution to the crisis. TheEU-3 (Britain, France, and Germany) initiated negotiations with Tehran inearly August 2003, and on October 21, Iran agreed to suspend its enrichmentand reprocessing programs and to allow the International Atomic EnergyAgency to conduct especially intrusive inspections. A year later, onNovember 15, 2004, Iran agreed "to continue and extend its suspension toinclude all enrichment related and reprocessing activities" and "to beginnegotiations,with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable agreement on longterm arrangements."7 4 Efforts to reach a satisfactory deal failed, however,and Iran announced in August 2005 that it would resume enriching its uranium.The EU-3 has continued talking with Iran, but to little avail.

Although the United States was willing to allow the EU-3 to try to haltIran's nuclear program through negotiations, it had little enthusiasm for thatbargaining process and was never strongly committed to making it work.7 5 Infact, by constantly threatening Iran and pushing the European negotiators tobe as tough as possible with their Iranian counterparts, the Bush administrationvirtually guaranteed that the negotiations would lead nowhere. Ifthere was any hope that diplomacy would succeed, the military threat had tobe taken off the table.

After diplomacy backed by threats failed to resolve the problem, theBush administration began pushing hard in the fall of 2005 to get the UNSecurity Council to impose sanctions on Iran. It finally succeeded in lateDecember 2006, when China and Russia agreed, after much foot dragging,to a package of limited sanctions.7 6 In late March 2007, the Security Councilapproved a second set of sanctions on Iran over its refusal to shut down

its nuclear enrichment facilities. These new sanctions, which were also limitedin scope, included a ban on Iranian arms exports, travel restrictions onindividuals associated with Iran's nuclear program, and freezing the assets ofsome individuals and organizations untouched by the first set of UN sanctions.7 7 Few experts believe that these measures will cause Iran to abandon

its nuclear program, and few believe that the United States will be able toconvince the Security Council to go along with the kind of tough sanctionsthat might work. But if UN sanctions are not the answer, what is?

THE ALTERNATIVES

The Bush administration has three options left for halting Iran's nuclear program:it can try to coerce Tehran by markedly increasing the pressure on itwith military measures short of war, tougher U.S. sanctions, and an anti-Irancoalition that includes Israel and the Arab states; it can try to eliminate itwith military force; or it can make a serious attempt to strike a grand bargainthat keeps Iran from developing nuclear weapons. Israel and most of the keyorganizations in the lobby, especially the neoconservatives, favor the secondoption. But Israeli leaders and their American supporters are well aware thatthere is widespread opposition to attacking Iran inside and outside of the

U.S. government, as well as in the international community, especially giventhe dire situation in Iraq. Moreover, it is clear that despite the rhetoric,PresidentBush has shown little enthusiasm for the military option, which is notto say he would never strike Iran.Bush's plan for 2007 appears to call for ramping up the pressure on Iranin the hopes that it will cave in to U.S. demands to stop enriching uranium.78As noted, the administration made a number of confrontational militarymoves in January that were aimed directly at Iran. And the president and Secretaryof State Rice have also begun making a concerted effort to get the Arabstates in the Middle East to line up with the United States and Israel againstIran. Against this backdrop, key groups in the lobby, which have been goingalong with Bush's policy for now, are mobilizing. The Forward reported on theeve of the March 2007 AIPAC conference that "the pro-Israel lobby is backingnew congressional legislation that would toughen sanctions against Iranand target foreign entities doing business with the Islamic Republic."7 9

So far this strategy has failed to produce results. The United States washeavily criticized by many Iraqis and even by the Kurds for arresting the fiveIranians. And then in March, the Iranians proved that two can play the gamewhen they detained fifteen British naval troops in the Persian Gulf, accusingthem of trespassing in Iranian territorial waters.8 0 Meanwhile, Iran continuesto develop its nuclear program and support Shia groups in Iraq. Thereis no evidence that sending additional carrier battle groups to the Gulf hashad any effect on Tehran's behavior. Congress may enact much tougher sane

tions, but the fact is that the administration is only mildly enthusiastic abouttaking that route, because this policy ends up imposing sanctions on alliesthat do business with Iran. It is a policy certain to strain U.S. relations withthose allies, possibly undermining their willingness to help Washington putadditional pressure on Iran.8 1

The administration s attempt to work closely with Arab states has madelittle progress, in good part because of America's continuing support of Israelover the Palestinians. In March, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia not only invitedIranian President Ahmadinejad to visit Riyadh but also canceled a visitto the White House and condemned the U.S. occupation of Iraq as "illegal."The director of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordansaid that Abdullah was "telling the U.S. they need to listen to their alliesrather than imposing decisions on them and always taking Israel's side." Asdiscussed in Chapter 7, Saudi Arabia was then pushing the Arab League toreissue its 2002 peace initiative for ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

the United States, however, was pressuring the Saudis to change the proposalbecause Israel was unhappy with it. Secretary Rice condescendinglyasked Arab countries to "begin reaching out to Israel." This admonition angeredthe Saudis, especially Abdullah, who responded by lashing out at theAmerican presence in Iraq.8 2

Coercion is unlikely to alter Tehran's calculations. This point is not loston Israeli leaders and their allies in the United States, most of whom see anuclear Iran as a mortal threat to Israel. For that reason, many have lobbiedrelentlessly not only to keep the military option on the table but also to makethe case that Iran is so dangerous that if it does not capitulate to Washington'sdemands, it will be necessary to use force. Consider what Prime MinisterEhud Olmert told a joint session of Congress on May 24, 2006. Helikened Iran with nuclear weapons to "the savagery of slavery, to the horrorsof World War II, to the gulags of the communist bloc." He emphasized thata nuclear-armed Iran was not just a threat to Israel but would put "the securityof the entire world .. . in jeopardy." He made it clear that he expectedthe United States to play the key role in preventing this "dark and gatheringstorm [from] casting its shadow over the world."8 3

A few months later, in November 2006, Olmert told a Newsweek interviewerthat he did not believe that Iran would accept a "compromise unlessthey have good reason to fear the consequences of not reaching a compromise.In other words, Iran must start to fear."84 By the spring of 2007,Olmert was intensifying the campaign to sell the military option. He toldGermany's Focus magazine in late April, "It is impossible perhaps to destroy

the entire nuclear program but it would be possible to damage it in such away that it would be set back years." Olmert estimated that "it would take 10days and would involve the firing of 1,000 Tomahawk cruise missiles."8 5 OneIsraeli general, however, questioned whether Bush had sufficient "politicalpower to attack Iran" and suggested instead that Israel "help him pave theway by lobbying the Democratic Party . . . and US newspaper editors .. . toturn the Iranian issue into a bipartisan one."8 6

Israeli officials also warn they may take preemptive action themselvesshould Iran continue down the nuclear road. Besides sending a signal to Iran,these threats keep the pressure on Washington to solve the problem, becausethe United States does not want Israel to act on its own. Prime Minister ArielSharon warned in late 2005 that "Israel—and not only Israel—cannot accepta nuclear Iran. We have the

ability to deal with this and we re making all thenecessary preparations to be ready for such a situation." London's SundayTimes reported in January 2007 that Israeli pilots were rehearsing a tacticalnuclear strike against Iran's facilities; although Israel officially denied thereport,it did serve as a powerful reminder of the importance Israel attaches tothis issue. As one Israeli defense analyst told the Associated Press, "It ispossiblethat this was a leak done on purpose, as deterrence, to say 'someone betterhold us back, before we do something crazy.'"87 Just in case this messagewas not getting through, Avigdor Lieberman, the deputy prime minister, toldDer Spiegel in February 2007 that if the international community does notsolve the problem, "Israel may have to act alone."8 8

Some in the lobby have moved beyond vague calls for "regime change"and begun to make the case that a nuclear-armed Iran is intolerable and theUnited States must be prepared to use force to deal with the problem.8 9Neoconservative pundits have been especially outspoken about the threatfrom Iran and the need to use force, or at least threaten it, to bring Iran toheel. The essence of their perspective is captured in the headline of anop-ed that Michael Rubin of the American Enterprise Institute published inthe New York Daily News on October 3, 2006: "To End Iran Standoff, Planfor War." Joshua Muravchik, who is also at the AEI, declared a month laterthat "President Bush will need to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities before leavingoffice. It is all but inconceivable that Iran will accept any peaceful inducementsto abandon its drive for the bomb."9 0 Similarly, Richard Perlesaid approvingly in January 2007 that "I have no doubt that if it becomes apparentto President Bush that during his term Iran will achieve nuclear

weapons, he will not hesitate to order a strike."9 1 Finally, Norman Podhoretzpublished a widely discussed article on May 30, 2007, in the online version

of the Wall Street Journal titled "The Case for Bombing Iran: I Hope andPray That Bush Will Do It."

AIPAC has also played a central role in publicizing the threat from Iranand pushing forward the military option. Its annual conference for the pasttwo years has put the Iran issue up in bright lights and emphasized the imperativeof ending its nuclear program.92 Indeed, John Hagee, who headsChristians United for Israel, was invited to address the 2007 conference.Hagee had told the Jerusalem Post in 2006 that "I would hope the UnitedStates would join Israel in a military pre-emptive strike to take out the nuclearcapability of Iran for the salvation of Western civilization."93 He did notdisappoint the attendees at the March 2007 conference, telling them, "It is1938; Iran is Germany, and Ahmadinejad is the new Hitler. We must stopIran's nuclear threat and stand boldly with Israel." He received multiplestanding ovations.9 4 By contrast, the New York Post reports that SenatorHillary Clinton "drew grumbles" the previous month when she suggested toan AIPAC audience that it might make sense to engage with Iran before employingstronger measures.9 5

Perhaps the best evidence of AIPAC's influence on U.S. policy toward Iranwas revealed in mid-March 2007, when Congress was attempting to attach aprovision to a Pentagon spending bill that would have required President Bushto get its approval before attacking Iran. In light of what has happened in theIraq war, this was a popular measure on Capitol Hill and appeared likely togain approval. It was also consistent with Congress's constitutional authority.But AIPAC was firmly opposed, because it saw the legislation as effectivelytaking the military option against Iran off the table. It went to work in the hallsof Congress, and with the help of a handful of pro-Israel representatives—Gary Ackerman, Eliot Engel, and Shelley Berkley (D-NV)—the provision wasremoved from the spending bill.9 6 One month later, when CongressmanMichael Capuano (D-MA) was asked why the language on Iran was strippedout of the bill, he answered with one word: "AIPAC." Congressman DennisKucinich (D-OH) offered the same assessment.9 7

Despite the commitment that Israel and some in the lobby have to pushingthe military option against Iran, it is widely recognized that

threatening touse force against Iran is counterproductive and actually attacking that country'snuclear facilities would have disastrous consequences.9 8 It would furtherdestabilize the Middle East and cause Iran to lash out at the United Statesand its allies. The last thing that Washington needs at this point is anotherwar against an Islamic country. The American military is already boggeddown in Baghdad, and Iran has substantially more territory and people than

Iraq. Furthermore, Iran would almost certainly not give up its nuclear programbut would redouble its efforts to rebuild it, as Iraq did after Israel destroyedits incipient nuclear capability in 1981. It is unsurprising that Charles Kupchan,an expert on European security issues, says, "I have yet to find a Europeanpolicymaker who thinks war is preferable to a nuclear Iran."9 9

In fact, Israel is the only country in the world where a substantial numberof people advocate the military option against Iran if it does not end its nuclearprogram—perhaps as much as 71 percent of the Israeli population, accordingto a May 2007 poll.10 0 Similarly, the core organizations in the lobbyare the only significant groups in the United States that favor going to waragainst the Islamic Republic. In early 2007, when retired General WesleyClark was asked why the Bush administration seemed headed for war withIran, he answered, "You just have to read what's in the Israeli press. The Jewishcommunity is divided but there is so much pressure being channeledfrom the New York money people to the office seekers." Clark was immediatelysmeared as an anti-Semite for suggesting that Israel and some AmericanJews were pushing the United States toward war with Iran, but as the journalistMatthew Yglesias pointed out, "Everything Clark said is true. What's

more, everybody knows it's true."10 1 Even more pointedly, former UN weaponsinspector turned author Scott Ritter said in his 2006 book Target Iran,"Let there be no doubt: If there is an American war with Iran, it is a war thatwas made in Israel and nowhere else."10 2 In short, if Israel and the lobby werenot pressing this case, there would be little serious discussion inside or outsidethe Beltway about attacking Iran.

THE LEAST BAD OPTION

As noted earlier, the best option available to the Bush administration is to removethe threat of force and attempt to reach a comprehensive agreementwith Iran.10 3 It is difficult to say whether this strategy would work, but thereis good reason to think that it might have worked in the past and might evenwork in the future. Iran signaled on two separate occasions since 9/11 that itwas seriously interested in reaching a negotiated settlement with the UnitedStates.10 4 Iran helped the United States topple the Taliban in the fall of 2001by providing advice on targets to strike in Afghanistan, facilitating U.S.cooperationwith the Northern Alliance, and helping with search-and-rescue missions.After the war, Tehran helped Washington put a friendly government in

place in Kabul. At the same time, Iran's President Khatami made it clear onceagain that he wanted to improve relations with the United States and sawevents in Afghanistan as a major step in that direction.

As was the case in the 1990s, there was substantial support within theCIA and the State Department for taking Khatami at his word and attemptingto normalize relations with Tehran. The neoconservatives inside and outsideof the administration, however, vehemently opposed that idea; theyfavored getting tough with Iran, and they carried the day with Bush andCheney. In his State of the Union address in late January 2002, the presidentrewarded Iran for its cooperation in Afghanistan by including it in theinfamous "axis of evil." Moreover, Bush made it clear in the followingmonths that although he was preoccupied with regime change in Iraq, hewould eventually turn to Iran and try to topple that government as well.

Despite America's hostility, Iran tried again in the spring of 2003, as ithad in 1997 during the Clinton administration, to reach out to the UnitedStates. Khatami said he was willing to negotiate on Iran's nuclear program,so that it would be readily transparent that "there are

no Iranian endeavorsto develop or possess WMD." Regarding terrorism, he said that Iran wouldend "any material support to Palestinian opposition groups (Hamas, Jihad,etc.)" and put "pressure on these organizations to stop violent action againstcivilians" within Israel's 1967 borders. On Hezbollah, Iran's goal would be tomake it "a mere political organization within Lebanon." Khatami also indicated"acceptance" of the 2002 Saudi peace initiative, which he made clearmeant acceptance of a two-state solution. Plus, Iran would help stabilizeIraq. In return, Khatami wanted the United States to remove Iran from theaxis of evil and take away the threat to use military force against his country.Sanctions also had to go, and Iran wanted "full access to peaceful nucleartechnology." In essence, Khatami was pushing forward a solution that had allthe ingredients of a grand bargain.10 5

Iran's offer was presented in May 2003, just after the United States appearedto have scored a stunning victory in Iraq, on the heels of whatseemed to be a stunning victory in Afghanistan. At that point, many peoplebelieved that the United States might actually be able to reorder the entireMiddle East. It was, in fact, an ideal time to push Tehran to cut a deal, becauseU.S. prestige and leverage were at their peak and Iran's sense of vulnerabilitywas acute. Unfortunately, America's favorable position made Bushmore inclined to dictate rather than deal. Not only was Israel pressing theBush administration hard at that point to take aim at Iran, but so were the

neoconservatives and others in the lobby. Bush paid hardly any attention toKhatami's offer to negotiate a comprehensive settlement between Iran and

the United States, and U.S. officials were ordered not to pursue it.

One cannot know whether a grand bargain would have been struck hadthe Bush administration pursued these opportunities. There were stillplenty of Iranian hard-liners who would have resisted making any kind ofdeal with the "great Satan." Nevertheless, Bush was foolish not to try toreach an agreement with Khatami, if only because that approach was theleast bad option. Trying to cut a deal might well have prevented the electionof President Ahmadinejad, whose irresponsible statements and bellicose attitudehave made a difficult situation worse. And if engagement had failedand Iran ultimately acquired nuclear weapons, the United States could stillfall back on a strategy of deterrence.

It may not be too late to strike a deal with Iran, although the chances ofachieving success are less likely now than in either 2001 or 2003. Not onlyhas America's bargaining position been eroded by events in Iraq, but Iranianleaders have more reason than ever not to trust Bush. Furthermore, MahmoudAhmadinejad has replaced Khatami as Iran's president, and he hasshown little interest in reaching out to the Bush administration. Nonetheless,there are still compelling reasons to pursue a grand bargain. Not only isit still the best strategy for stopping Iran from acquiring a nuclear arsenal,but the United States needs Iran's help to rescue the situation in Afghanistanas well as Iraq. This is why the Iraq Study Group recommendedin December 2006 that President Bush negotiate with Iran rather than confrontit.10 6 Its members understood that confronting Iran—as the Bush administrationhas done in the past—gives it powerful incentives to meddle inAfghanistan and Iraq, which is definitely not in America's interest.10 7

There is actually substantial support within the United States for engagingIran in serious negotiations.10 8 As noted, many in the CIA, the StateDepartment, and the military would back the idea. A poll taken in lateNovember 2006, just before the Iraq Study Group released its report, foundthat 75 percent of Americans believe that the United States "should dealwith the government of Iran primarily by trying to build better relations."Only 22 percent favor "pressuring it with implied threats that the US mayuse military force."10 9 The recommendation to engage Iran from the IraqStudy Group—a bipartisan committee of prominent individuals—is anotherindicator of the breadth of support for negotiations. Even Thomas L. Friedmanof the New York Times, who is usually attuned to Israel's concerns, remarkedin early 2007 that Iran is a "natural ally" of the United

States.11 0

Although it makes good strategic sense for the United States to pursue agrand bargain with Iran, and although there is plenty of support for that policyinside and outside of America, it is unlikely to happen anytime soon. Israeland the lobby will almost certainly try to thwart any efforts to seriouslyengage Iran before they get started, as they have consistently done since1993. Indeed, the lobby has gone out of its way to undermine the Iraq StudyGroup's recommendation that the Bush administration negotiate with Iran.The release of the report, according to the Forward, "has produced an outpouringof protest from Jewish groups opposing its call for talks with Iran,Syria and the Palestinians." Nevertheless, "insiders say that the real target ofIsrael's anxiety is neither Syria nor the Palestinians, but Iran and its nuclear

"ni

program. 11 1

The lobby is also likely to try to make sure that the United States continuesto threaten Iran with military strikes unless it abandons its nuclear enrichmentprogram. Given that this threat has not worked in the past and isunlikely to work in the future, some of Israel's American backers, especiallythe neoconservatives, will continue to call for the United States to carry outthe threat. Although there is still some chance that President Bush will decideto attack Iran before he leaves office, it is impossible to know for sure.There is also some possibility, given the inflexible rhetoric of the presidentialcandidates, that his successor will do so, particularly if Iran gets closer todeveloping weapons and if hard-liners there continue to predominate. If theUnited States does launch such an attack, it will be doing so in part on Israel's

behalf, and the lobby would bear significant responsibility for having pushedthis dangerous policy. And it would not be in America's national interest.

CONCLUSION

As with U.S. policy toward the Palestinians, the tragic decision to invadeIraq, and the confrontational approach to Syria, the Israel lobby's influenceon American policy toward Iran has been harmful to the national interest.By opposing any détente between Iran and the United States, much less cooperation,the lobby has also strengthened Iran's hard-liners, thereby makingIsrael's security problems worse. But its negative impact does not stopthere. The lobby's influence during the 2006 war in Lebanon also did considerableharm to both the United States and to Israel, as the next chapterwill show.

11

THE LOBBY AND

THE SECOND LEBANON WAR

In the summer of 2006, Israel fought a thirty-four-day war against Lebanon.On July 12, Hezbollah, the Shia organization that controls the southern partof Lebanon, made a cross-border raid that killed and captured several Israelisoldiers. In response, the Israel Defense Forces launched a major air campaignin Lebanon, which killed more than eleven hundred Lebanese, mostof whom were civilians and roughly a third of whom were children. It alsodid extensive damage to Lebanon's infrastructure, including roads, bridges,office buildings, apartment buildings, gas stations, factories, water-pumpingstations, airport runways, homes, and supermarkets.1 Although virtually noone challenged Israel's right to respond to the raid, or to defend itself, itsexcessiveresponse was widely condemned around the globe.

Despite strong support from the United States, Israel failed to achieve itsmilitary or political objectives and Hezbollah emerged from the war with itspopularity and prestige significantly enhanced. The IDF's chief of staff,Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, resigned a few months later, and an officialIsraeli government investigation chaired by former Supreme Court JusticeEliyahu Winograd subsequently issued a scathing assessment of Israel'splanning and handling of the war. In particular, the Winograd Commissionfound that Israel's leaders had failed to "consider the whole range of options,""failed to adapt the military way of operations and its goals to the realityon the ground,"

and pursued goals that were "not clear and could not beachieved."2

The war was also a major setback for the United States. It weakened theSiniora government in Beirut, whose election after the "Cedar Revolution"

of 2005 had been one of the few successes in the Bush administration'sMiddle East policy. The war also solidified the informal alliance amongHezbollah, Syria, and Iran, and intensified anti-American attitudes throughoutthe region, thereby undermining the war on terror and complicating

U.S. efforts to forge a regional consensus on Iraq and Iran.How did this happen? Although primary responsibility for mishandlingthe war lies with Israel's leaders, the United States encouraged their mistakesby offering them unconditional support before and during the war. Israel hadbriefed the Bush administration on its plans to go after Hezbollah well beforethe war began on July 12 and was given a tacit green light by Washington.Unlike the rest of the world, including virtually all the major democracies,the United States did not criticize Israel's actions during the war and gave itvaluable diplomatic and military backing instead. The Israel lobby workedthroughout the war to keep the United States in Israel's corner.

It did not make strategic sense for the Bush administration to back Israelsdisproportionate response to Hezbollah's provocations, and there wasalso no compelling moral case for supporting Israel's conduct. America's uncriticalbacking was not in Israel's interest either. As the Winograd reportsuggests, Israel would have been much better off if its leaders had examined"the whole range of options." In other words, the United States would havebeen a better ally if it had urged a different course of action when Israel firstoutlined its plan to attack Lebanon. Had the United States done so, Israelwould have been forced to come up with a smarter response and might haveavoided the debacle that subsequently befell it in Lebanon.

Israelis and many of their American supporters do not want to admit thatthe lobby heavily influenced U.S. policy both before and during the secondLebanon war, and they offer several alternative explanations designed tocounter this charge. As is the case in other contexts, some defenders arguethat the U.S. government's unflinching support for Israel's assault reflects theAmerican public's deep commitment to the Jewish state. The Americanpeople, in this view, wanted U.S. leaders to back Israel to the hilt, and soPresident Bush and the Congress were simply bowing to the will of thepeople. Others claim that Israel was acting as America's client state in its warwith Hezbollah. According to this version of events, the Bush administrationwas the driving force behind the war and it got its loyal Israeli client to do itsbidding. These alternative explanations might seem intuitively plausible tosome observers, but neither is consistent with the available evidence.

PREWAR PLANNING

Israel has launched a number of major military strikes against Lebanon overthe past forty years, but it previously had fought only one genuine war onLebanese territory. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Menachem Beginand Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, Israel invaded Lebanon in June1982. It was eighteen years before the IDF finally left Lebanon, and it wasHezbollah that drove them out. Israel and Hezbollah remained bitter enemieseven after Israel withdrew, and occasional skirmishes continued totake place along the Israeli-Lebanese border. It was just such a skirmish onJuly 12, 2006, that erupted into Israel's second war in Lebanon.

Concerned about the huge stockpile of missiles and rockets that Hezbollahhad acquired from Syria and especially Iran, Israel had been planning tostrike at Hezbollah for months before the July 12

abductions. Gerald Steinberg,a well-connected Israeli strategist, made these points during the war:"Of all of Israel's wars since 1948, this was the one for which Israel was mostprepared. In a sense, the preparation began in May 2000, immediately afterthe Israeli withdrawal, when it became clear the international communitywas not going to prevent Hezbollah from stockpiling missiles and attackingIsrael. By 2004, the military campaign scheduled to last about three weeksthat we're seeing now had already been blocked out and, in the last year ortwo, it's been simulated and rehearsed across the board."3

Similarly, Seymour Hersh reported, "Several current and former officialsinvolved in the Middle East told me that Israel viewed the soldiers' kidnappingas the opportune moment to begin its planned military campaignagainst Hezbollah. 'Hezbollah, like clockwork, was instigating somethingsmall every month or two,' the U.S. government consultant with ties to Israelsaid."4 Indeed, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told the WinogradCommission that "his decision to respond to the abduction of soldiers witha broad military operation was made as early as March 2006," which wasfour months before the conflict started. At that time, he asked to see the existing"operational plans" for war with Lebanon, because "he did not want tomake a snap decision in the case of an abduction." Olmert also said that inNovember 2005, his predecessor, Ariel Sharon, "ordered the army to preparea 'list of targets' for a military response in Lebanon" after a failed Hezbollahattempt to capture IDF troops in a border village. Olmert held his first meetingon Lebanon in early January 2006, four days after he was appointed toreplace the incapacitated Sharon, and he subsequently "held more meetingson the situation in Lebanon than any of his recent predecessors."5

Israeli officials reportedly briefed key individuals inside and outside ofthe Bush administration about their intentions well before July 12. Hershwrites, "According to a Middle East expert with knowledge of the currentthinking of both the Israeli and the U.S. governments, Israel had deviseda plan for attacking Hezbollah—and shared it with Bush Administrationofficials—well before the July 12th kidnappings." Likewise, Matthew Kalmanreports in the San Francisco Chronicle that "more than a year ago, a seniorIsraeli army officer began giving PowerPoint presentations, on an off-therecordbasis, to U.S. and other diplomats, journalists and think tanks, settingout the plan for the current operation in revealing detail. Under theground rules of the briefings, the officer could not be identified."6

The available evidence indicates that the Bush administration endorsedIsrael's plans for war in Lebanon. According to Hersh, "Earlier this summer,before the Hezbollah kidnappings, the U.S. government consultant said,several Israeli officials visited Washington, separately, 'to get a green light forthe bombing operation and to find out how much the United States wouldbear.'The consultant added, 'Israel began with Cheney. It wanted to be surethat it had his support and the support of his office and the Middle Eastdesk of the National Security Council.' After that, 'persuading Bush wasnever a problem, and Condi Rice was on board,' the consultant said."7

There is not much information in the public record about the decisionmakingprocess that led President Bush to back Olmert's plan to attackLebanon at an opportune moment. Nevertheless, there is reason to thinkthat the neoconservatives played a key role in that process. Not only had theneoconservatives been angling to smash Hezbollah since September 11, butthe two most influential advisers on Middle East affairs in the White Housein the months before and during the Lebanon war were dedicated supportersof Israel and its hard-line policies toward its adversaries, includingHezbollah.8 Elliott Abrams was the key person on the National SecurityCouncil dealing with Middle East policy. The New York Times reported duringthe war that he "has pushed the administration to throw its support behindIsrael."9

The other key figure was David Wurmser, Vice President Cheney's adviseron Middle East affairs.10 He was one of the authors of the 1996 "CleanBreak" study, which advocated that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahuend the Oslo peace process and use military force

to change thepolitical landscape in the Middle East. In particular, it called for "securing"Israel's northern border "by engaging Hizballah, Syria, and Iran, as theprincipal agents of aggression in Lebanon."1 1 Wurmser was, as Adam Shatz

wrote in the New York Review of Books well before the second Lebanon war,"an open advocate of preemptive war against Syria and Hezbollah, a positionfavored by neoconservatives in and close to the Bush administration."12When Seymour Hersh reports, as quoted above, that Israel was interested ingetting "the support of [Cheney's] office and the Middle East desk of theNational Security Council," he is effectively saying that Olmert wanted theapproval of Abrams and Wurmser, which he surely got. Beyond that basicfact, which is neither surprising nor controversial, little is known about theBush administration's planning role in the months before the second Lebanonwar.

Nothing in this account suggests that either Israel or the United Stateswas conspiring to provoke a war in Lebanon. Given the simmering tensionsalong the border and Israel's legitimate concerns about Hezbollah's missilesand rockets, it made perfect sense for the IDF to formulate plans for addressingthis threat. After all, every competent military leadership plans forcontingencies that may never arise. It also made perfect sense for Israel toconsult with its American patron about its plans, to make sure it was notpreparing for a course of action that Washington might oppose.

"THE MIGHTY EDIFICE OF SUPPORT"1 3

Once the war began and Israel came in for severe criticism from all cornersof the globe, the Bush administration provided Israel with extraordinarydiplomatic protection. Its UN ambassador, John Bolton, whom Israel's UNambassador once jokingly described as a sixth member of the Israeli delegation,vetoed a Security Council resolution that criticized Israel and workedassiduously for about a month to prevent the UN from imposing a cease-fire,so that Israel could try to finish the job with Hezbollah.1 4 Secretary of StateCondoleezza Rice downplayed the violence at a press conference, at onepoint dismissing it as the "birth pangs of a new Middle East."1 5 Only whenit became apparent that the IDF was not going to win a decisive victory didthe Bush administration—and Israel—recognize the need for a ceasefire.During the ensuing negotiations that led to UN Resolution 1701, theUnited States went to great lengths to protect Israel's interests. In fact, asthe resolution was being finalized, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmertcalled President Bush on August 11 and thanked him for "safeguarding Israel'sinterests in the Security Council."I 6

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The president frequently defended Israel's actions in public and never uttereda critical word. UN Ambassador Bolton told the Security Council thatHezbollah's goal was "to deliberately target innocent civilians, to desire theirdeath," while the disproportionate numbers of Lebanese civilians killed by Israelwere "the sad and highly unfortunate consequences of self-defense."1 7 Inaddition to this diplomatic support, the administration provided Israel withmilitary intelligence during the conflict, and when Israel started running lowon precision-guided bombs, the president quickly agreed to send replacements.1 8 During the height of the war, it successfully pressed Turkey and Iraqto deny permission to a plane loaded with missiles for Hezbollah to cross Turkishand Iraqi airspace on its way from Iran to Damascus.1 9 As Shai Feldman,a well-connected Israeli scholar, noted during the latter stages of the war,"There is huge, huge appreciation here for the president."20

As we have seen in other contexts, Israel usually finds its strongest supportin the U.S. Congress, and congressional behavior during the Lebanonconflict unequivocally confirmed this tendency. Democrats and Republicanscompeted to show that their party, not the rival one, was Israel's bestfriend. One Jewish activist said he thought that "it's a good thing to havemembers of Congress outdo their colleagues by showing that their pro-Israeli credentials are stronger than the next guy's."21 In the end, there wasvirtually no daylight

between the two parties regarding Israel's actions inLebanon, which is remarkable when you think of the sharp differences betweenDemocrats and Republicans on most other foreign policy issues, likeIraq, for example. Abraham Foxman, the head of the ADL, made this clearwhen he said, "The Democrats who are opposed to the president on 99 percentof things are closing ranks on Israel."2 2

Reflecting this bipartisan consensus, on July 20, 2006, the House ofRepresentatives passed a strongly worded resolution condemning Hezbollahand supporting Israeli policy in Lebanon. The vote was 410-8. The Senatefollowed suit with a similar resolution, sponsored by sixty-two senators, includingthe leaders of both parties. A number of prominent Democrats,including the party's leaders in both the House and the Senate, tried toprevent Iraq's prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki, from addressing Congress, becausehe had criticized Israeli policy in Lebanon.2 3 Howard Dean, the chairmanof the Democratic party, who had been targeted by the lobby in thepast, went so far as to call the Iraqi prime minister an anti-Semite.2 4 Supportin Congress for Israel was so overwhelming that it left Arab-American leadersstunned. Nick J. Rahall, a Democratic congressman of Lebanese descent, said

that the House resolution made him "just sick in the stomach, to put it mildly."James Zogby, who heads the Arab American Institute, said, "This is so devastating.I thought that we'd come further than this."2 5

Potential presidential candidates for 2008—like Senators Hillary Clinton,John McCain, and Joe Biden (D-DE)—as well as former Speaker of theHouse Newt Gingrich, went to especially great lengths to convey their support

for Israel.2 6 The only exception was Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE), whoexpressed mild reservations about Israel's response and America's supportfor it. Hagel's comments were largely ignored by his congressional colleaguesas well as the lobby, although they undoubtedly did nothing tofurther his own presidential ambitions.2 7

The mainstream media also stood firmly behind Israel. Editor & Publisher,a distinguished journal that covers the newspaper industry, surveyeddozens of newspapers about a week after the war began and found that "almostnone of them have condemned the Israeli attack on civilian areas andthe infrastructure of Lebanon."2 8 The twenty-four-hour cable news stationswere filled with reports and commentary that portrayed the Jewish state as abeleaguered combatant that could do no wrong.

Israel did not fare as well on the front pages of newspapers and in thestraight-out news coverage in the media. A Harvard study claims that "onthe front pages of the New York Times and Washington Post, Israel was portrayedas the aggressor nearly twice as often in the headlines and exactlythree times as often in the photos."2 9 This news coverage was largely unavoidable,however, because Israel was causing much greater destruction inLebanon than Hezbollah was causing in northern Israel. By the end of thefighting, Hezbollah had killed 43 Israeli civilians and damaged or destroyedabout 300 buildings in Israel. The IDF, by contrast, had killed as many as750 Lebanese civilians and damaged or destroyed roughly 16,000 Lebanesebuildings.30 Given those numbers, the camera quickly became Israel's enemy.Media coverage was also shaped by the fact that both Hezbollah andthe Siniora government in Beirut favored a cease-fire almost as soon as thefighting started, while Israel wanted to prolong the war until its leaders realizedthat their war aims could not be achieved.

Editorial commentary remained relentlessly pro-Israel throughout theconflict, however, and it often crept into the news coverage, thus ensuringthat the overall portrayal of Israel in the American media was very favorable.The situation in the mainstream media was nicely summed up in an articlein the British newspaper the Independent: "There are two sides to everyconflict—unless you rely on the US media for information about the battle

in Lebanon. Viewers have been fed a diet of partisan coverage which treatsIsrael as the good guys and their Hezbollah enemy as the

incarnation ofevil . . . Not only is there next to no debate, but debate itself is consideredunnecessary and suspect."3 1

What makes America s overwhelming support for Israel so remarkable isthat the United States was the only country that enthusiastically supportedIsrael's actions in Lebanon. Almost every other country in the world, as wellas the UN leadership, criticized Israel's reaction as well as Washington'sunyieldingsupport for it. These circumstances raise the obvious question: whywas the United States so out of step with the rest of the world?

STRATEGIC FOLLY

One possible answer is that supporting Israel made eminently good strategicsense for the United States. But that is not the case. Israel's strategy for wagingthe war was guaranteed to fail because, as the Winograd Commissionnotes, "The assumptions and expectations of Israel's actions were not realistic."Israel's response reflected "weakness in strategic thinking," so the Bushadministration was backing a losing strategy from the outset.3 2

Israel's main goal in the second Lebanon war was to deal a massive blowto Hezbollah's effectiveness as a fighting force. In particular, the Israeliswere determined to eliminate the thousands of missiles and rockets thatcould strike northern Israel. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert drove this pointhome when he said, "The threat will not be what it was. Never will they beable to threaten this people they fired missiles at."3 3 Similarly, the Israeliambassadorin Washington said, "We will not go part way and be held hostageagain. We'll have to go for the kill—Hezbollah neutralization."34 Writing in

the Wall Street Journal, former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu proclaimedthat Israel's goal was straightforward: "Remove the missiles. Or destroythem."3 5

Israel had two different but complementary ways to try to neutralizeHezbollah's missiles and rockets. Israeli leaders were confident that theycould use airpower to strike directly at those weapons and take almost all ofthem out.3 6 They also had a more indirect approach for dealing with the problem.Specifically, they planned a classic punishment campaign, whereby theIDF would inflict massive pain on Lebanon's civilian population by destroyingresidences and infrastructure and forcing hundreds of thousands ofpeople to flee their homes. Such a campaign would inevitably kill a signifi

cant number of civilians in the process. Olmert made this point clearly at apress conference right after the kidnapping, when he promised a "verypainful and far-reaching" response.3 7 The aim of the punishment campaignwas to send a message to Lebanon's leadership that it was ultimately responsiblefor Hezbollah's actions, and therefore the country as a whole would paya great price anytime Hezbollah attacked Israel. The prime minister wasclear on this point as well: "The Lebanese government, of which Hezbollahis a member, is trying to undermine regional stability. Lebanon is responsibleand Lebanon will bear the consequences of its actions."3 8

Both elements of this strategy were destined to fail from the start. Tryingto disarm Hezbollah from the air was simply not feasible; even with an amplesupply of smart bombs, there was no way the Israeli Air Force was goingto eliminate Hezbollah's ten thousand to sixteen thousand rockets and missiles.3 9 Most of those weapons were widely dispersed and located in caves,homes, mosques, and other hiding places. Moreover, even if the IDF managedto destroy a large portion of Hezbollah's inventory, Iran and Syria wouldhave sent in replacements. Not surprisingly, it quickly became apparent thatairpower was not having the advertised effect, as missiles and rockets continuedto reach northern Israel daily. In fact, Hezbollah launched more missilesat Israel on August 13—one day before the cease-fire took effect—thanon any other day of the war.4 0

In late July, the Olmert government decided to rectify the problem bysending large numbers of ground troops into Lebanon, claiming that Israelwould need a few more weeks to defeat Hezbollah once and for all.4 1 Butthis was another fool's errand. After all, the

IDF had fought Hezbollah inLebanon between 1982 and 2000, and Hezbollah had not only survived, iteventually forced Israel to withdraw in 2000. How was Israel now going toachieve in a few weeks what it could not accomplish in eighteen years? Theground offensive failed to produce decisive results and Israel had no choicebut to accept a cease-fire on August 14.4 2 Israel suffered its highest singleday of casualties two days before the cease-fire went into effect.4 3

The second element of Israel's strategy—its attempt to punish Lebanonfor allowing Hezbollah to operate freely—was also certain to backfire. Awealth of historical evidence and scholarly literature makes clear that inflictingpain on an adversary's civilian population rarely causes a rival governmentto throw up its hands and surrender to the attacker's demands.4 4 On thecontrary, the victims usually direct their anger at the attacker and, if anything,become more supportive of their own government. Indeed, Israel hadtwice before launched large-scale bombing campaigns against Lebanon—

Operation Accountability in 1993 and Operation Grapes of Wrath in1996—and both failed to damage Hezbollah in any meaningful way or undermineits popular support.4 5

History repeated itself in 2006: in the wake of Israel's punishment campaign,Hezbollah's popularity surged in Lebanon (and across the Arab andIslamic world), and most Lebanese vented their rage at Israel and theUnited States rather than at Hezbollah or the government in Beirut.4 6 But

even if this case had turned out to be an anomaly and Israel's bombs hadconvinced Lebanon's leadership that it was now time to disarm Hezbollah,it did not have the capability to do that. Hezbollah was too powerful and thegovernment was too weak.

After about two weeks of fighting, with Hezbollah still lobbing missilesand rockets at northern Israel and the punishment campaign backfiring, Israelbegan to define victory downward. Its leaders began emphasizing goalslike eliminating Hezbollah's forward positions and deploying an internationalforce to protect Israel against Hezbollah attacks.4 7 Back in the UnitedStates, the Forward reported that "sources close to the White House and thePentagon said [that] administration hawks have expressed disappointmentand frustration about Israel's inability to deal a swift and decisive blow toHezbollah." Some of Israel's more hawkish supporters began saying out loudthat Israel was in danger of losing the war, and a few even questionedwhether Israel was still a strategic asset for the United States. CharlesKrauthammer wrote in the Washington Post on August 4 that the war gave Israel"an extraordinary opportunity" to make "a major contribution to America'swar on terrorism." The United States, however, "has been disappointed"in Israel's performance, which "has jeopardized not just the Lebanon operationbut America's confidence in Israel as well."4 8

When the war finally ended on August 14, both sides declared victory.49It was clear to most independent experts, however, that Hezbollah had comeout ahead in the fight.50 By virtually all accounts it performed well on thebattlefield, and it was standing tall when the shooting stopped. It also retainedthousands of missiles and rockets that threatened Israel, and its politicalposition in Lebanon and the Islamic world was much improved by thewar. Israel, on the other hand, failed to achieve its initial goals and the IDFhad stumbled badly when it engaged Hezbollah. It has become manifestlyclear with the passage of time—especially in Israel—that Hezbollah was thewinner and Israel the loser. The Winograd Commission "was appointed dueto a strong sense of a crisis and deep disappointment with the consequencesof the campaign and the way it was conducted."5 1 Its main findings are an

unequivocal indictment of the three main architects of the war: Prime MinisterOlmert, Defense Minister Amir Peretz, and General Dan Halutz, theIDF chief of staff.

DAMAGE TO U.S. INTERESTS

Leaving aside the issue of whether Israel or Hezbollah won the secondLebanon war, there is no question that U.S. interests suffered from its outrightsupport for Israel's actions. As we have made clear, the United Statescurrently faces three major problems in this region. The first problem is terrorism,which is mainly about vanquishing al Qaeda, although the UnitedStates also wants to neutralize Hamas and Hezbollah. The second concern isthe remaining rogue states in the area, Iran and Syria. Both support terrorism,and Iran seems determined to master the full nuclear fuel cycle, which wouldput it a short step away from nuclear weapons. The third problem is the Iraqwar, which the United States is in serious danger of losing. The Bushadministration'sunyielding support for Israel during the second Lebanon war hascomplicated Washington's ability to deal with each of these problems.

The conflict in Lebanon has complicated America's terrorism problem intwo ways. It has reinforced anti-Americanism in the Arab and Islamic world,with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah describing Israel during the fightingas having been "armed with an American decision, with American weapons,and American missiles."5 2 This perception surely will help al Qaeda and otherterrorist organizations find new recruits who want to attack the United Statesor its allies. For example, in a poll taken in Lebanon in late August 2006,just after the fighting had ended, 69 percent of the respondents said thatthey considered America an "enemy of Lebanon." Less than a year earlier, inSeptember 2005, the number was 26 percent.5 3 In another poll taken inLebanon in late August 2006, 64 percent of the respondents said that theiropinion of the United States was worse after the fighting than before it.Nearly half of the respondents said that their opinion of America was "much

worse" in the aftermath of the war.54 A Zogby poll taken in the fall of 2006 inSaudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Lebanon found that "in all fivecountries, attitudes towards the U.S. have worsened in the last year." U.S.policy in Lebanon contributed to that negative shift in attitudes, although thewar in Iraq and Washington's policy toward the Palestinians were more importantfactors.5 5 This increased hostility toward the United States will generatemore public support for terrorists in the Middle East and elsewhere.

THE LOBBY AND THE SECOND LEBANON WAR

Furthermore, the conflict has increased Hezbollah's influence in Lebanon.This is partly due to its impressive performance against the IDF, whichhas normally defeated its Arab opponents decisively but failed to do so in thiscase. Israel's bombing campaign was also a major reason for Hezbollah's soaringpopularity. When the war first began, many Lebanese were angry withHezbollah for precipitating the conflict, especially because a "banner touristseason . . . was underway in Lebanon."5 6 There was also much goodwilltoward the United States among the Lebanese people at the beginning of theconflict, mainly because the Bush administration had played the key role inpushing Syria out of Lebanon in 2005. However, that goodwill toward theUnited States turned to outrage when Washington backed Israel's offensive;correspondingly, Hezbollah's standing in Lebanon rose dramatically.

One poll conducted in Lebanon after the war found that 79 percent ofthe respondents rated the performance of Hezbollah leader Nasrallah aseither "good" or "great," while another poll found that 40 percent of Lebanesehad a more positive attitude toward Hezbollah after the war, while justunder 30 percent had a more negative view.57 Although Hezbollah does notdirectly threaten the United States, it does threaten Israel and it is aimingto reverse the Cedar Revolution completely, which President Bush supportedand which he extols as a successful case of democracy promotion. Bythe late fall of 2006, Hezbollah was throwing its increased weight aroundand threatening to bring down the pro-American government in Beirutheaded by Fouad Siniora.5 8 More worrisome is the real possibility thatHezbollah's actions will plunge Lebanon into another civil war. The UnitedStates has worked hard with its allies to prevent this outcome and has beensuccessful so far. But in all likelihood the problem would not have arisen ifHezbollah had not been emboldened by its success and widespread support.

The conflict in Lebanon has also made it more difficult to deal with Iranand Syria. While there is no question that both countries support Hezbollah,the United States has a powerful interest in weakening or breaking thoselinks, as well as the link between Damascus and Tehran.5 9 Driving a wedgebetween Iran and Syria should not be difficult as they are not natural allies;Iran is theocratic and Persian, while Syria is secular and Arab. Instead, theBush administration blindly supported Israel during the war and treatedHezbollah, Iran, and Syria as part of a seamless web of evil, pushing themcloser together.6 0

On top of that, many neoconservatives called for Israel or the UnitedStates to attack Syria and Iran in the midst of the conflict.6 1 Indeed, MeyravWurmser of the Hudson Institute said after the war that "many parts of the

American administration"—and almost certainly her husband, David Wurmser,and Elliott Abrams—were deeply upset with Israel for not having struckSyria as well as Hezbollah.6 2 The result? This policy gave Iran even morereason to acquire nuclear weapons, so that it can deter an Israeli or U.S. attackon its homeland. And Iran and Syria have continued to arm and supportHezbollah, while helping to keep the United States bogged down in Iraq, sothat it cannot attack either of them.6 3

The blowback had other consequences in Iraq: what happened inLebanon also angered the Iraqis themselves, especially the Iraqi Shia, whofeel a loose sense of allegiance to Hezbollah (which is also Shia). Indeed,the Shia rally for Hezbollah that took place in Baghdad on August 4 was reportedto be the largest of its kind in the Middle East.6 4 There have evenbeen reports in the aftermath of the Lebanon war that Hezbollah is training

the Iraqi militia of Moqtada al-Sadr, who is a bitter enemy of the UnitedStates.6 5 The United States is in deep trouble in Iraq and cannot afford tofurther alienate the local population.

In order to confront these three issues—terrorism, rogue states, andIraq—in the most effective way, Washington needs broad support fromfriendly regimes in the region like Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Theseregimes have no love for Hezbollah, and they might have supported theUnited States (and tacitly, Israel) had the American and Israeli responsebeen more restrained. Indeed, in the first days of the conflict, the leaders ofthose countries were critical of Hezbollah for provoking it. But once Israelsdisproportionate response was clear and the Bush administration firmly endorsedit, these leaders began to criticize Washington and to condemn Israel.The main reason that they turned against the United States and Israelwas to protect themselves from their enraged publics.6 6 American policyalso angered allies in Europe as well as the Middle East, leaving the UnitedStates (and Israel) isolated and short of political clout, and raising doubtsabout whether President Bush is a reliable ally for dealing with the terroristand proliferation threats.6 7

One might think that the sharp cleavage that developed between Arableaders and their publics during the Lebanon war quickly dissipated whenthe shooting stopped and thus has had no serious long-term effects. But thatwould be wrong, as Arab public opinion remains deeply hostile to theUnited States, making it difficult for Arab regimes to help the Bush administrationcontain Iran's ambitions. The root of the problem is that the socalledArab street fears the United States much more than it fears Iran. AZogby poll released in February 2007 found that 72 percent of the respon

dents in six Arab countries identified the United States as their biggestthreat, while only 11 percent identified Iran. Furthermore, 61 percent of therespondents said that Iran has the right to develop a nuclear capability, eventhough more than half of them think Iran is likely to go the next step andbuild nuclear weapons.6 8

It is also worth noting that the IDF's poor performance in Lebanonsuggests that it will not be of great value to the United States in dealing withthe threat environment that its actions helped create. As we argued in Chapter2, Israel's policies nurture and inspire terrorist groups and complicate

U.S. efforts to deal with rogue states like Syria and Iran, but Israel is notmuch of an asset for dealing with them.Backing Israel's strategy in its war with Lebanon was not in America'sstrategic interest. It is hard to disagree with former State Department officialAaron Miller's observation in the middle of the conflict: "There is a dangerin a policy in which there is no daylight whatsoever between thegovernment of Israel and the government of the United States."6 9

BREAKING THE LAWS OF WAR

But what about the moral dimension? One might concede that U.S. supportfor Israel had significant strategic costs but argue that the United States hasa moral obligation to back Israel's efforts to defend itself. Israel was attacked,so the argument runs, and it responded in a way that conformed to the lawsof war. Indeed, some of Israel's supporters claim that its poor performance inLebanon was due mainly to its strict adherence to these legal and moral principles.For example, Thomas Neumann, the executive director of the JewishInstitute for National Security Affairs, maintains that "it wasn't Hezbollahthat tied Israel down as much as it was Israels own sense of morality."70

On close inspection, however, this line of argument is not convincing. Israelclearly has the right to defend itself, and that right includes retaliatingagainst Hezbollah with military force. Hardly anyone contests that basicpoint, and many of the governments and individuals who have criticized Israel'sconduct never questioned its right to respond to Hezbollah's raid. Buthaving the right to defend oneself does not mean that any and all measuresare legally or morally permissible. The critical issue is whether Israel's actions

in Lebanon during the summer of 2006 were consistent with the lawsof war and with established standards of morality.

As discussed above, Israel's strategy explicitly and deliberately sought to

inflict punishment on Lebanon's civilian population. One might easily getthe impression that Israel initiated this punitive campaign in response toHezbollah's own missile and rocket attacks against Israeli civilians, but thatis not how the war actually evolved. It began on July 12, when Hezbollahfighters crossed into Israeli territory, killed three Israeli soldiers, and capturedtwo more. As part of that operation, Hezbollah launched a few dozenrockets at some Israeli towns for the purpose of diverting the IDF's attentionaway from the abduction site. No Israeli civilians were killed in those diversionaryattacks.7 1 Nasrallah said immediately afterward at a news conferencein Beirut, "We don't want an escalation in the south, not war."72Though unjustifiable, the Hezbollah raid was not an unusually provocativeact, as both Israel and Hezbollah had been conducting violent—and sometimeslethal—incursions into each other's territory since Israel withdrewfrom southern Lebanon in May 2000.7 3 Nasrallah had even made it clearmonths in advance that he was determined to kidnap some Israeli soldiers.7 4

Nevertheless, Israel responded to the abductions by launching a massivebombing campaign against Lebanon, which in turn led Hezbollah to followsuit and unleash its rockets and missiles at towns and cities across northernIsrael. Specifically, the IDF struck Beirut International Airport among othertargets on July 13, the day after Hezbollah struck across Israel's border. TheIDF continued to pound Lebanon from the air on the 14th, striking atbridges and roads, as well as Nasrallah's office in Beirut. At this point, withmore than fifty Lebanese civilians dead and damage to Lebanon's infrastructuremounting, Nasrallah promised "open war" against Israel, which meantextensive missile and rocket attacks.7 5 Thus, although Hezbollah clearlyprecipitatedthe war by killing or capturing IDF soldiers on June 12, Israel initiatedthe large-scale attacks against civilians.

Israeli leaders emphasized from the start that all of Lebanon would pay asevere price in the war and this punishment would be the result of a deliberateIsraeli policy, not merely "collateral damage." IDF Chief of Staff Halutzsaid at the beginning of the conflict that he intended to "turn back the clockin Lebanon by 20 years."76 He also

said at one point that "nothing is safe" inLebanon.7 7 He was true to his word. In a report issued in August 2006, justafter the fighting ended, Amnesty International provided a detailed assessmentof what the IDF wrought in Lebanon, which is worth quoting at length:

During more than four weeks of ground and aerial bombardment of

Lebanon by the Israeli armed forces, the country's infrastructure

suffered destruction on a catastrophic scale. Israeli forces pounded

buildings into the ground, reducing entire neighborhoods to rubbleand turning villages and towns into ghost towns, as their inhabitantsfled the bombardments. Main roads, bridges and petrol stations wereblown to bits. Entire families were killed in air strikes on their homesor in their vehicles while fleeing the aerial assaults on their villages.Scores lay buried beneath the rubble of their houses for weeks, as theRed Cross and other rescue workers were prevented from accessingthe areas by continuing Israeli strikes. The hundreds of thousands ofLebanese who fled the bombardment now face the danger of unexplodedmunitions as they head home.

The Israeli Air Force launched more than 7,000 air attacks onabout 7,000 targets in Lebanon between 12 July and 14 August,while the Navy conducted an additional 2,500 bombardments. Theattacks, though widespread, particularly concentrated on certain

areas. In addition to the human toll—an estimated 1,183 fatalities,about one third of whom have been children, 4,054 people injuredand 970,000 Lebanese people displaced—the civilian infrastructurewas severely damaged. The Lebanese government estimates that 31Vital points" (such as airports, ports, water and sewage treatmentplants, electrical facilities) have been completely or partially destroyed,as have around 80 bridges and 94 roads. More than 25 fuelstations and around 900 commercial enterprises were hit. The numberof residential properties, offices and shops completely destroyedexceeds 30,000. Two government hospitals—in Bint Jbeil and inMeis al-Jebel—were completely destroyed in Israeli attacks andthree others were seriously damaged.

In a country of fewer than four million inhabitants, more than 25per cent of them took to the roads as displaced persons. An estimated500,000 people sought shelter in Beirut alone, many of them in parksand public spaces, without water or washing facilities.

Amnesty International delegates in south Lebanon reported that invillage after village the pattern was similar: the streets, especially mainstreets, were scarred with artillery craters along their length. In somecases cluster bomb impacts were identified. Houses were singled outfor precision-guided missile attack and were destroyed, totally or partially,as a result. Business premises such as supermarkets or foodstores and auto service stations and petrol stations were targeted, oftenwith precision-guided munitions and artillery that started fires anddestroyed their contents. With the electricity cut off and food and

other supplies not coming into the villages, the destruction of supermarketsand petrol stations played a crucial role in forcing local residentsto leave. The lack of fuel also stopped residents from gettingwater, as water pumps require electricity or fuel-fed generators.7 8

Amnesty International is not alone in its assessment of the damage thatthe IDF inflicted in Lebanon. William Arkin, an American expert on militaryaffairs and a self-proclaimed "fan of airpower," wrote in his Washington Postweblog that "in carrying out its punishment campaign, Israel has left behinda shocking level of destruction outside the direct battle zone. I hesitate touse the words 'laid to waste' and moonscape' in describing the conditions inurban Lebanon because the same kinds of words are thrown around sopromiscuously in describing U.S. air strikes. But what Israel has

wrought isfar more ruinous than anything the U.S. military—specifically the U.S. AirForce—has undertaken in the era of precision warfare."79

One of the more devastating punitive tactics was Israel's use of clusterbombs, which spray large numbers of bomblets over a wide area. Thesebomblets are not only highly inaccurate; many of them do not explode,which effectively means that they become deadly land mines that continueto be a threat long after the end of hostilities. Given how lethal theseweapons can be when used in civilian areas, the United States has alwaysinsisted that Israel use them against clearly defined military targets.8 0 Indeed,as noted, the Reagan administration banned the sale of cluster bombsto Israel for six years during the 1980s, after it discovered that the IDF hadused them against civilian areas in its 1982 invasion of Lebanon.8 1

In the last three days of the recent Lebanon war, when a cease-fire wasknown to be imminent, the IDF fired over one million bomblets into southernLebanon, which has a population of 650,000.8 2 The aim was to "saturatethe area" with these small but deadly bombs. One Israeli soldier in an artillerybattalion said, "In the last 72 hours we fired all the munitions we had, all atthe same spot. We didn't even alter the direction of the gun. Friends of minein the battalion told me they also fired everything in the last three days—ordinary shells, clusters, whatever they had."8 3 Over the course of the entirewar, the IDF is estimated to have fired roughly four million bomblets intoLebanon. When the fighting finally stopped in mid-August, UN officials estimatedthat there were about one million unexploded bomblets in the southernpart of the country. Researchers from Human Rights Watch said that "thedensity of cluster bombs in southern Lebanon was higher than in any place

they had seen."8 4 One Israeli soldier who helped "flood" the area with cluster

bombs said, "What we did was insane and monstrous, we covered entiretowns in cluster bombs."8 5 Jan Egeland, the UN's under-secretary-general forhumanitarian affairs, labeled Israel's actions "shocking" and "completely immoral."86 In the first eight months after the war, 29 Lebanese were killed bycluster bombs and another 215 were injured, 90 of them children.8 7

It seems intuitively clear that Israel's destructive campaign in Lebanonviolated the laws of war. Still, that is not enough; it is important to understandwhat those laws are and exactly how Israel violated them.

The bedrock distinction that underpins the laws of war—as well as modernjust war theory—is between civilian and military targets.8 8 There is noquestion that states have the right to defend themselves by attacking eachother's military assets. However, states are not supposed to attack civiliantargets in another country unless they are transformed into military targetsin the course of the war. If troops occupy a school or a church during a battle,for example, and use it as a base of operations, then it is permissible toattack them there. Furthermore, when attacking an adversary's military targets,states must make a determined effort to minimize collateral damage.This is where the well-known concept of proportionality comes into play.Specifically, states striking at military targets must make sure that there isnot excessive collateral damage, given the particular value of those militarytargets. In short, states cannot attack enemy civilian targets on purpose orindiscriminately, and they must take great care to avoid collateral damagewhen striking at military targets.

Israel failed to observe both of these distinctions in the second Lebanonwar. There is no question that Israel deliberately attacked a wide array ofcivilian targets in Lebanon, just as General Halutz said that they would. Thedescription of the devastation in the Amnesty International report makesthis clear. Remember, it concluded that Lebanon's "infrastructure suffereddestruction on a catastrophic scale." That same report says at another pointthat Israel's bombing campaign resulted in "massive destruction of civilianinfrastructure." Amnesty International issued another report in November2006, which reinforced the findings in its August report. For example, itfound that "in southern Lebanon, some 7,500 homes were destroyed and20,000

damaged" and that in "the overwhelming majority of destroyed ordamaged buildings it examined," there was "no evidence to indicate that thebuildings were being used by Hizbullah fighters as hide-outs or to storeweapons." Indeed, it "noted a pattern of destruction by Israeli attacks thatindicated that Israeli forces had targeted objects that are indispensable tothe survival of the civilian population."89 In a separate study of Israel's offen

sive in Lebanon, Human Rights Watch (HRW) concluded that "Israel hasviolated one of the most fundamental tenets of the laws of war: the duty tocarry out attacks on only military targets."9 0

It is also clear that Israel did not exercise sufficient care to avoid collateraldamage when striking targets that it considered military in nature. HRW concludedthat despite Israel's claims that it was "taking all possible measures tominimize civilian harm," there was, in fact, "a systematic failure by the IDF todistinguish between combatants and civilians."91 Consider what happened insouthern Lebanon, which the Israelis effectively turned into a "free-fire zone,"where any person left in the area was considered a legitimate target. Afterwarning the residents of that area to leave, Minister of Justice Haim Ramon—who had said that "we must reduce to dust the villages of the south"—announced on July 27 that "all those now in south Lebanon are terrorists whoare related in some way to Hizbullah."92 However, many residents had not left,and many of the people who remained were neither combatants nor membersof Hezbollah. Amnesty International estimates that about 120,000 people remainedthroughout the conflict, many of them civilians. On August 7, the IDFspread leaflets over southern Lebanon warning that "any vehicle of any kind

traveling south of the Litani River will be bombarded, on suspicion of transportingrockets, military equipment and terrorists."93

In light of these actions, Amnesty International concluded in its Novemberreport that "Israeli forces committed serious violations of internationalhuman rights and humanitarian law, including war crimes. In particular,Amnesty International has found that Israeli forces carried out indiscriminateand disproportionate attacks on a large scale."9 4 Similarly, the HRWreport finds that "the IDF consistently tolerated a high level of civiliancasualtiesfor questionable military gain."9 5 At least one Israeli leader made nobones about the fact that Israel was violating the proportionality principle.Dan Gillerman, Israel's ambassador to the UN, said one week after the warstarted, "To those countries who claim that we are using disproportionateforce, I have only this to say: You're damn right we are. Because if your citieswere shelled the way ours were, if your citizens were terrorized the way oursare, you would use much more force than we are using."9 6

Gillerman's telling admission was an exception, however. Most Israelisand their American supporters respond to the charge that Israel engaged indisproportionate attacks by acknowledging that Israel may have killed a largenumber of innocent Lebanese, but they insist that it was because Hezbollahused them as human shields.9 7 The evidence in Amnesty International's Novemberreport and in the HRW study contradicts that line of defense. One

part of Israel's defense is the claim that Hezbollah prevented civilians fromleaving southern Lebanon because it wanted to hide behind them. AmnestyInternational investigated this matter and found that the available evidence"does not substantiate the allegations that Hizbullah prevented civilians fromfleeing, and in several cases points to the contrary."98 Also, there is good reasonto believe that Hezbollah fighters purposely avoided contact with civiliansfor fear that "they will sooner or later be betrayed by collaborators."99

But even more important, the available evidence, as the HRW studymakes clear, does not support the claim that Israel ended up killing large numbersof civilians because Hezbollah used the civilians who remained in southernLebanon as shields. To be clear, HRW does acknowledge that "Hezbollahoccasionally did store weapons in or near civilian homes and fighters placedrocket launchers within populated areas or near U.N. observers," both ofwhich "are serious violations of

the laws of war."10 0 In other words, there issome evidence that Hezbollah used civilians to protect its fighters andweapons. Nevertheless, those cases were clearly the exception, not the rule."The vast majority killed," according to Kenneth Roth, HRW's executive director,"were civilians, with no Hezbollah military presence nearby."101 Specifically,HRW examined twenty-four cases in detail, which included aboutone-third of the civilians killed in Lebanon at the time of the report.10 2 Itfound no evidence in any of those cases that "Hezbollah deliberately usedcivilians as shields to protect them from retaliatory IDF attack."10 3

One could accept this finding and offer a different defense, claiming thatalthough Hezbollah may not have deliberately used civilians as shields, it didfight from populated areas, especially when its fighters were defending theirhome village or town. In such cases, Hezbollah would not be violating the lawsof war by "hiding behind civilians"; it would simply be defending its own territory.If this were the case, some may argue, Israel could not help but kill civiliansin the process of targeting Hezbollah. Although Hezbollah often fought inand around towns and villages, this line of defense does not work either. In onlyone of the twenty-four cases researched by HRW "is there evidence to suggestthat Hezbollah forces or weapons were in or near the area that the IDF targetedduring or just prior to the attack."10 4 In short, both Amnesty International'sNovember report and the HRW study provide substantial evidencethat contradicts Israel's claims about Hezbollah and its human shields.

Furthermore, the IDF clearly failed to distinguish between civilian andmilitary targets when it saturated southern Lebanon with cluster bombs justbefore the cease-fire took effect. As one artilleryman put it, "We fired likemadmen."10 5 This particularly cruel action—which is hard not to see as an

act of long-term vengeance—cannot be excused by either of the counterargumentsnoted above. Nor can it be justified on the grounds that Hezbollahalso committed war crimes when it fired missiles and rockets indiscriminatelyinto northern Israel, killing Israeli civilians.

Given this overwhelming evidence, it is impossible to make the case thatthe United States supported Israel during the second Lebanon war becauseit was the morally correct policy choice. If morality were the issue, the Bushadministration would have condemned both Israel's and Hezbollah's actionsin Lebanon from the start.

THE LOBBY IN OVERDRIVE

AIPAC and other pro-Israel organizations worked overtime from the start tothe finish of the war to make sure that America fully backed Israel. Fourdays after the war began, Nathan Guttman reported in the Jerusalem Postthat "the American Jewish community has been demonstrating wall-to-wallsupport for Israel as it fights on two fronts."10 6 The lobby raised money forthe Jewish state, took out advertisements in newspapers, closely monitoredthe media, and sent its representatives to meet with legislators and staff inCongress, policy makers in the Bush administration, and influential mediafigures. Moreover, since the fighting ended, pro-Israel organizations havebeen hard at work dealing with the fallout from the war.

To see the lobby's impact, consider the following six incidents.

First, at the beginning of the war, there was a bipartisan effort to temperthe House resolution supporting Israel by inserting language urging "allsides to protect civilian life and infrastructure." Congresswoman NancyPelosi (then House minority leader) and Senator John Warner (R-VA; thenchairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee), among others, favoredthis change in the legislation, considering the moral issues at stake. Onewould think that such language would be unobjectionable, if not welcome.But AIPAC, which wrote the original resolution and was the main drivingforce behind it, strongly objected to this particular clause. John Boehner, theHouse majority leader, kept the proposed new language out of the resolution,which still passed 410-8. 10 7

Second, Congressman Christopher Van Hollen (D-MD) wrote a letter toSecretary of State Condoleezza Rice on July 30, urging her "to call for an immediatecease-fire to be followed by the rapid deployment of an internationalforce in southern Lebanon." He also wrote:

The Israeli response . . . has now gone beyond the destruction ofHezbollah's military assets. It has caused huge damage to Lebanon'scivilian infrastructure, resulted in the large loss of civilian life, andproduced over 750,000 refugees. Hezbollah is undeniably the culprit,but it is the Lebanese people—not Hezbollah—who are increasinglythe victims of the violence. As a result, the Israeli bombing campaign,supported by the United States, has transformed Lebanese anger atHezbollah into growing hostility toward Israel and the United States.The result has been a surge in the political strength and popularity ofHezbollah and its leader, Hasan Nasrallah, and the weakening of thealready fragile Lebanese government . . . We have squandered an opportunityto isolate Hezbollah and strengthen our credibility andnegotiating leverage in the region.10 8

Although Van Hollen's letter focused primarily on U.S. interests and supportedIsrael's right to defend itself, the lobby was furious with him for daringto criticize Israel and quickly moved to make it manifestly clear that heshould have never written that letter.10 9 Van Hollen met with variousrepresentativesfrom major Jewish organizations, including AIPAC, and the congressmanimmediately apologized, saying, "I am sorry if my strong criticismof the Bush Administration's failures has been interpreted as a criticism of

Israel's conduct in the current crisis. That was certainly not my intention."11 0 He emphasized that he would continue to be a strong advocate forIsrael and shortly thereafter went on a five-day visit to Israel (sponsored byan AIPAC affiliate, the American Israel Education Foundation), accompaniedby three pro-Israel activists from his district and a staffer from AIPACitself.

Despite his apology, the leader of the Jewish Community RelationsCouncil of Greater Washington told a reporter that Van Hollen "needs tocontinue to reach out to the Jewish community .. . to reassure the Jewishcommunity he is going to be there" for Israel. The ADL's regional director forWashington said that as far as he was concerned, Van Hollen's response"doesn't undo the damage of the first letter."11 1 The goal, of course, was notmerely to chastise Van Hollen but also to remind other members of Congressof the costs of getting out of line on this issue.

Third, early in the war, President Bush gently encouraged Israel to becareful not to topple the democratically elected government in Lebanon,which he had helped put in power. "The concern," he said, "is that any activitiesby Israel to protect herself will weaken [the Lebanese] government,

or topple that government."11 2 Bush made it clear that he and his lieutenantshad conveyed their views to Israeli leaders.

The lobby took issue with Bush and made it clear that his position wasunacceptable. The Forward reported on July 14 that "the Bush administrationis being criticized by some Israeli and Jewish communal officials forcalling on Jerusalem not to undermine the democratically elected Lebanesegovernment." Abraham Foxman of the ADL said, "The administration andWestern countries want to shore up the Lebanese government but it is amisguided policy to do so and the same holds true for Abu Mazen . . . Theyfeel it's better than a vacuum, but you should not support what's meaningless.And we knew from day one that Abu Mazen would go nowhere and thatthe Lebanese government would be ineffective."11 3 In the wake of this criticism,Bush stopped warning Israel about the need to protect the Americanbackedgovernment in Beirut.

Fourth, Tom Ricks, the well-known Washington Post journalist, said onCNN during the war that "some U.S. military analysts" had told him that "Israelpurposefully has left pockets of Hezbollah rockets in Lebanon, because aslong as they're being rocketed, they can continue to have a sort of moralequivalencyin their operations in Lebanon."11 4

In response, the Committee for Accuracyin Middle East Reporting in America condemned Ricks's remarks, andEd Koch, the former mayor of New York City, wrote to Leonard Downie Jr.,the executive editor of the Post, complaining about Ricks's comments. Kochsaid that they "are comparable to the age-old blood libel used by anti-Semitesto incite pogroms in Europe." Downie wrote back to Koch, saying, "I havemade clear to Tom Ricks that he should not have made those statements."11 5Why? Downie did not say. For his part, Ricks said, "The comments were accurate:that I said I had been told this by people. I wish I hadn't said them, andI intend from now on to keep my mouth shut about it."11 6

Fifth, pro-Israel groups conducted a large-scale campaign to smear AmnestyInternational and especially Human Rights Watch for their criticalreports on Israel's bombing campaign. According to Alan Dershowitz, "Virtuallyevery component of the organized Jewish community, from secular to religious,liberal to conservative, has condemned Human Rights Watch for itsbias."11 7 Both human rights organizations were unfairly accused of singlingout Israel while largely ignoring Hezbollah and of misrepresenting importantaspects of what was happening on the ground in Lebanon. At the same time,AIPAC sent out press releases designed to convey the message that the IDFwas conducting surgical strikes against terrorists and avoiding civilians.11 8

Charges of anti-Semitism were quickly leveled at both human rights

groups. Kenneth Roth, the executive director of HRW, took the brunt ofthose attacks, even though he is Jewish and his father was a refugee fromNazi Germany. The Jerusalem Post, for example, ran an op-ed by GeraldSteinberg titled "Ken Roth's Blood Libel." The New York Sun asserted in aneditorial that Roth was partaking in the "de-legitimization of Judaism," becausehe criticized the IDF's strategy in Lebanon as an "eye for an eye—ormore accurately in this case twenty eyes for an eye—[which] may have beenthe morality of some more primitive moment." Abraham Foxman reacted ina similar way to Roth's language, accusing him of employing "a classic anti-Semitic stereotype about Jews."11 9

Responding to such charges, the Georgetown law professor and columnistRosa Brooks only slightly overstated the case when she wrote in the LosAngeles Times that "anyone familiar with Human Rights Watch—or withRoth—knows this to be lunacy. Human Rights Watch is non-partisan—itdoesn't 'take sides' in conflicts. And the notion that Roth is anti-Semiticverges on the insane." Brooks went on to say, "But what's most troublingabout the vitriol directed at Roth and his organization isn't that it's savage,unfounded and fantastical. What's most troubling is that it's typical. Typical,that is, of what anyone rash enough to criticize Israel can expect to encounter.In the United States today, it just isn't possible to have a civil debateabout Israel, because any serious criticism of its policies is instantlycountered with charges of anti-Semitism."12 0

Sixth, the lobby went to work to limit the damage from the cluster bombcontroversy. On August 31, B'nai B'rith International sent a letter to Jan Egeland,the UN leader who had criticized Israel's use of cluster bombs, accusinghim of acting "as an un-appointed moral arbiter with regard to disputed, unprovenfacts on the ground and the interpretation of international humanitarianlaw."121 A week later, the Senate was debating legislation that would banthe use of cluster bombs in civilian areas and prohibit the transfer of thosedeadly weapons to countries that refused to accept that ban. AIPAC lobbiedhard against the legislation, which went down to defeat by a vote of 70-30. 12 2

Key organizations in the lobby have been open and candid in discussingtheir influence on U.S. policy in Lebanon. For example, AIPAC's president,Howard Friedman, wrote a letter to friends and supporters of his organizationon July 30, which he began by saying, "Look what you've done!" He thenwrote, "Only ONE nation in the world came out and flatly declared: Let Israelfinish the job. That

nation is the United States of America—and thereason it had such a clear, unambiguous view of the situation is YOU andthe rest of American Jewry."12 3 It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Israeli

Prime Minister Olmert said during the war, "Thank God we have AIPAC,the greatest supporter and friend we have in the whole world."12 4

Organizations like AIPAC and the ADL were not the only players in thelobby that were hard at work during the recent conflict. Journalists likeCharles Krauthammer and William Kristol made the case, to use Kristol'swords, that Israel's war is "our war, too."12 5 Many Christian Zionists also ralliedbehind Israel. For example, the televangelist Pat Robertson made athree-day visit to Israel during the war "to offer," according to the JerusalemPost, "his support for a country whose very existence he believes is threatenedby Hizbullah." Robertson told the Post, "The Jews are God's chosenpeople. Israel is a special nation that has a special place in God's heart. Hewill defend this nation. So Evangelical Christians stand with Israel. That isone of the reasons I am here."12 6 John Hagee's organization, ChristiansUnited for Israel, held a two-day Washington/Israel Summit in the capital inmid-July. It attracted thirty-five hundred people, and participants were encouragedto express their support for Israel to their senators and representatives.12 7 The executive director of the Christian Friends of Israel offered arather un-Christian insight: "This was certainly an unprovoked attack andIsrael has every right to go in and pound them."12 8

Indeed, Israel did "go in and pound them" with the unconditional backingof the U.S. government and many in the lobby.

Was Washington's steadfast support for Israel's actions in Lebanon the resultof the lobby's influence, or did it simply demonstrate that the Americanpeople are deeply committed to Israel? Perhaps Israel received unconditionalsupport because U.S. public opinion demanded it. Jennifer Cannata,an AIPAC spokeswoman, made this familiar argument during the war. Afterdenying that the lobby had any influence, she proclaimed that "the Americanpeople overwhelmingly support Israel's war on terrorism and understandthat we must stand by our closest ally in this time of crisis."12 9

This line of argument is not convincing. What happened during theLebanon war fits the pattern we have already seen: U.S. policy did not reflectthe views of the American public. This point is clearly revealed in a wide arrayof survey results on six critical issues involving Lebanon. On the questionof who is to blame for starting the conflict, an ABC News-WashingtonPost poll conducted August 3-6, 2006, found that 46 percent of the respon

dents said that Israel and Hezbollah were equally to blame.13 0 Another 7percent blamed Israel alone. A CBS News—New York Times poll conductedJuly 21-25, 2006, also found that 46 percent of the respondents blamed"both sides equally," while 5 percent blamed "mostly Israel."

Regarding the question of whether Israel had gone too far in its attacks,a USA Today-GaWwp poll conducted July 21-23, 2006, found that 38 percentof the respondents said they "disapprove of the military action Israelhas taken in Lebanon." In the ABC News-Washington Post poll, 32 percentof the respondents said they thought that Israel was using "too much force,"while 48 percent said that Israel was "not justified in bombing Hezbollahtargets located in areas where civilians may be killed or wounded." Fifty-fourpercent said that Israel "should do more" to avoid civilian casualties.

On whether the United States should support Israel or remain neutral inthe conflict, the USA Today-GaWup poll found that 65 percent of the respondentssaid that the United States should take "neither side" in the conflict.In a Zogby poll taken August 11-15, 2006, 52 percent of the respondentssaid that the United States should remain neutral in the conflict.13 1 In theCBS News-New York Times poll, 40 percent of the respondents said thatthe United States should

not publicly support either Israel or Hezbollah andshould "say or do nothing." Seven percent favored criticizing Israel, and 14 percentwere unsure what to do. Thirty-nine percent favored supporting Israel.In an NBC News-WaZZ Street Journal poll taken July 21-24, 2006, 40 percentof the respondents opposed "U.S. military involvement in support of Israel"if the Lebanon war expanded to the point "where Israel is fightingseveral other nations in the region."

As to whether the United States and Israel should agree to an immediatecease-fire, a CNN poll conducted on July 19, 2006, found that 43 percentof the respondents thought that "Israel should agree to a cease-fire as soonas possible." In the ABC News-Washington Post poll, 35 percent of the respondentssaid that "Israel should agree to an immediate, unconditionalcease-fire in Lebanon."

With respect to the consequences of the Lebanon war for Americas terrorismproblem, 44 percent of the respondents in the USA Today-Galluppoll said that they were "very concerned" that events in Lebanon "willincrease the likelihood of terrorism against the United States." Thirty-onepercent were "somewhat concerned" that the Lebanon war would worsenAmerica's problem with terrorism. Finally, 35 percent of the respondents inthe ABC News-Washington Post poll said that the Lebanon war would "hurtthe situation for the United States in Iraq."

In short, there was a sizable gap between how Americans thought aboutIsrael and the Lebanon war and how their leaders in Washington talked and

behaved during that conflict. Mass opinion cannot explain why the Bushadministrationand Congress acted as they did in the summer of 2006.

DOING AMERICA'S BIDDING?

Another way to absolve the lobby of responsibility for American policy inLebanon is to claim that the United States was the real driving force behindthe war and that Israel was merely an obedient client state. Israel, in otherwords, was acting as a loyal ally and serving the Bush administration's interestsin the Middle East. "The Second Lebanon War," the Israeli journalistUri Avnery writes, "is considered by many as a 'War by Proxy.' That's to say:Hizbullah is the Dobermann of Iran, we are the Rottweiler of America.Hizbullah gets money, rockets and support from the Islamic Republic, weget money, cluster bombs and support from the United States of America."13 2 Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah apparently agrees, telling anIranian television station that "the United States ordered the Zionist regimeto invade Lebanon" and that Israel did so in order to "serve American ambitionsin the Middle East."13 3

Although many U.S. officials regard Hezbollah as an enemy and were notsorry when Israel went after it, there are four good reasons to doubt theclaim that Israel was simply doing Washington's bidding when it escalatedthe conflict with Hezbollah. If Israel were acting on America's behalf, itsbombing campaign would have been confined to southern Lebanon and greatcare would have been taken to protect and strengthen the Lebanese government.After all, President Bush made it clear at the start of the crisis that hedid not want to endanger the government in Beirut, which he had worked hardto install. More generally, the United States almost certainly would not havewanted to "turn the clock back in Lebanon by twenty years," as called for bythe IDF's chief of staff.

There is also little evidence that the Bush administration planned the offensiveand then pushed Israel to execute it. As discussed above, the availableevidence about the planning process suggests that Israel had plannedthe Lebanon campaign in the months before the kidnapping on July 12,which it used as a pretext for launching it. Israel undoubtedly briefed theUnited States about the plan and got the administration's endorsement, but

giving Israel the green light is not the same as using Israel as a

client stateand telling it what to do.

One sometimes hears the argument that the Bush administration encouragedIsrael to bomb Lebanon because it would be an opportunity to testthe weapons and strategy that the U.S. military might use in an air waragainst Iran's nuclear facilities. As one U.S. government consultant told SeymourHersh, "Why oppose it? We'll be able to hunt down and bomb missiles,tunnels, and bunkers from the air. It would be a demo for Iran."13 4Aside from the fact that not opposing Israel's plan is different from pushingIsrael to strike Hezbollah, the claim that American policy makers sawLebanon as a dry run for Iran makes little sense, as the assigned tasks inthese two scenarios have little in common. Attacking small groups of guerrillasarmed with missiles and rockets who are hiding in the Lebanese countrysideis a fundamentally different mission from bombing a handful ofidentifiable and firmly fixed nuclear installations in Iran. It is not clear whatimportant lessons would be learned from an air war against Hezbollah thatwould help make a U.S. offensive war against Iran more effective.

Furthermore, there is evidence that in the spring of 2003, around thetime of the fall of Saddam, Israel was urging the United States to attackHezbollah, not the other way around. According to the Forward, the Israeliswere warning American policy makers that "the militant Shiite organizationthreatens the stability of the Middle East and the security of the UnitedStates worldwide."135 There is no evidence—at least in the public record—that the Bush administration was tempted to go after Hezbollah or that itencouraged Israel to handle that task itself.

Finally, Israel's history is at odds with this depiction of it as a tame client

state for any country, the United States included. Israel has always been atough-minded and self-interested actor on the international stage, whichmakes sense given the challenging regional environment it has faced sinceindependence. Shabtai Shavit, the head of the Mossad from 1989 to 1996,made this point emphatically: "We do what we think is best for us, and if ithappens to meet America's requirements, that's just part of a relationshipbetween two friends." Regarding the Lebanon war, he added, "Hezbollah isarmed to the teeth and trained in the most advanced technology of guerrillawarfare. It was just a matter of time. We had to address it."13 6 These are notthe words of a compliant proxy. Or as Moshe Dayan once remarked, "OurAmerican friends offer us money, arms, and advice. We take the money, wetake the arms, and we decline the advice."13 7

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, none of the alternative explanations can adequately account forAmerican policy during the second Lebanon war. Nor can one find a compellingstrategic or moral rationale that explains why the United States providedIsrael with unyielding support while the rest of the world harshlycriticized Israeli behavior. In fact, the lobby played the critical role in keepingthe United States firmly aligned with Israel during the conflict, despitethe strategic costs and dubious moral position this entailed.

The war in Lebanon has been a disaster for the Lebanese people, as wellas a major setback for the United States and for Israel. The lobby enabledIsraels counterproductive response by discouraging the Bush administrationfrom exercising independent judgment and influence either before orduring the war. In this case, as in so many others, the lobby's influence hasbeen harmful to U.S. as well as Israeli interests.

Until the lobby begins to favor a different approach, or until its influenceis weakened, American policy in the region will continue to be hamstrung,to the detriment of all concerned. In the final chapter, we identify what U.S.policy ought to be, and we discuss how the lobby's negative impact might bemitigated or modified.

CONCLUSION:

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

In Part I of this book, we argued that strategic and moral considerationscould neither explain nor justify the current level of

U.S. support for Israel.Nor could they account for the largely unconditional nature of that support,or for America's willingness to conduct its foreign policy in ways that are intendedto safeguard Israel. The main explanation for this anomalous situation,we suggested, is the influence of the Israel lobby. Like other specialinterest groups, the individuals and organizations that make up the lobby engagein a number of legitimate political activities, in their case intended topush U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction. Some parts of the lobbyalso employ more objectionable tactics, such as attempting to silence orsmear anyone who challenges the lobby's role or criticizes Israel's actions.Although the lobby does not get everything it wants, it has been remarkablysuccessful in achieving its basic aims.

In Part II, we traced the lobby's impact on U.S. Middle East policy and arguedthat its influence has been unintentionally harmful to the United Statesand Israel alike. Washington's reflexive support for Israel has fueled anti-Americanism throughout the Arab and Islamic world and undermined the

U.S. image in many other countries as well. The lobby has made it difficultfor U.S. leaders to pressure Israel, thereby prolonging the Israeli-Palestinianconflict. This situation gives Islamic terrorists a powerful recruiting tool andcontributes to the growth of Islamic radicalism. Turning a blind eye to Israel'snuclear programs and human rights abuses has made the UnitedStates look hypocritical when it criticizes other countries on these grounds,

and it has undermined American efforts to encourage political reformthroughout the Arab and Islamic world.

The lobby's influence helped lead the United States into a disastrous war inIraq and has hamstrung efforts to deal with Syria and Iran. It also encouragedthe United States to back Israel's ill-conceived assault on Lebanon, a campaignthat strengthened Hezbollah, drove Syria and Iran closer together, and furthertarnished America's global image. The lobby bears considerable, though notcomplete, responsibility for each of these developments, and none of them wasgood for the United States. The bottom line is hard to escape: although America'sproblems in the Middle East would not disappear if the lobby were less influential,U.S. leaders would find it easier to explore alternative approaches andbe more likely to adopt policies more in line with American interests.

The lobby's influence has not helped Israel either, especially in recentyears. U.S. aid has indirectly subsidized Israel's prolonged and costly effortto colonize the Occupied Territories, and the lobby has made it impossiblefor Washington to convince Israel to abandon this counterproductive policy.Its ability to persuade Washington to support this expansionist agenda hasalso discouraged Jerusalem from seizing opportunities—such as a peacetreaty with Syria or full and prompt implementation of the Oslo Accords—that would have saved Israeli lives, divided Israel's adversaries, and shrunkthe ranks of Palestinian extremists. Enabling Israel's refusal to recognize thePalestinians' legitimate aspirations has not made Israel safer. The long campaignto kill, imprison, or marginalize a generation of Palestinian leaders hashelped bring groups like Hamas to power and reduced the number of Palestinianleaders who would welcome a negotiated settlement and be able tomake it work. The U.S. invasion of Iraq—which Israel and the lobby bothencouraged—turned out to be a major boon for Iran, the country many Israelisfear most. And by pressing U.S. officials to back Israel's assault onLebanon, groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, ChristiansUnited for Israel, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Conference ofPresidents of Major American Jewish Organizations did further damage tothe country they thought they were protecting. In all these cases, the lobby'sactions were directly harmful to Israel.

What is to be done? To reverse the damage that recent U.S. policies haveinflicted, a new strategy is clearly needed. But developing and implementinga different approach means finding ways to address the power of the lobby.Charting a fresh course will therefore require

• Identifying U.S. interests in the Middle East• Outlining a strategy to protect those interests• Developing a new relationship with Israel

• Ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a two-state solution• Transforming the lobby into a constructive forceLet us consider each of these steps.

WHAT ARE U.S. INTERESTS?

The overriding goal of U.S. foreign policy is to ensure the safety and prosperityof the American people. In pursuit of that end, the United States has alwaysconsidered the security of the Western Hemisphere to be ofparamount importance. In recent decades, policy makers have also consideredthree other regions of the world to contain strategic interests importantenough to fight and die for: Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf.1These regions are important because they contain either concentrations ofpower or critical natural resources, and who controls them has profound effectson the global balance of power.

The United States has three distinct strategic interests in the MiddleEast. Because this region contains a large percentage of global energy supplies,the most important interest is maintaining access to the oil and naturalgas located in the Persian Gulf. This objective does not require theUnited States to control the region itself; it merely needs to ensure that noother country is in a position to keep Middle East oil from reaching the

world market. To do this, the United States has long sought to prevent anylocal power from establishing hegemony in the Gulf and to deter outsidepowers from establishing control of the region.

A second strategic interest is discouraging Middle Eastern states from acquiringweapons of mass destruction. As discussed in Chapter 2, the risk hereis not the remote possibility of deliberate nuclear attack, nuclear blackmail, ora deliberate "nuclear handoff " to terrorists, because such threats are not crediblein light of America's own nuclear deterrent. Rather, the United States opposesthe spread of WM D in the region because it would make it more difficultto project power into the region and thus might complicate U.S. efforts to keepMiddle East oil flowing. WM D proliferation also increases the dangers of accidentalor unauthorized nuclear use. Given the potential for instability in somecountries in the area, it also raises the risk that nuclear weapons or other WM Dmight fall into the wrong hands in the event of a coup or revolt, or be stolen byterrorists from poorly guarded facilities. For all these reasons, inhibiting thespread of WMD in the region is an important U.S. objective.

Third, the United States has an obvious interest in reducing anti-American terrorism. This goal requires dismantling existing terrorist networksthat threaten the United States and preventing new terror groups fromemerging. Both objectives are furthered by cooperating extensively and effectivelywith countries in the region, mostly in terms of intelligence sharing andother law enforcement activities. It is also imperative that the United Statestake all feasible steps to prevent groups like al Qaeda from gaining access toany form of WMD. Terrorists armed with WM D would be more difficult todeter than states with WMD, and they are likely to use them against Americaor its allies. Encouraging political reform and greater democratic participationcan assist this goal as well—which in turn requires good relations with key regionalpowers—although the United States should be wary of rapid transformationand certainly should not try to spread democracy at the point of a gun.

Although we believe that America should support Israel's existence, Israel'ssecurity is ultimately not of critical strategic importance to the UnitedStates.2 In the event that Israel was conquered—which is extremely unlikelygiven its considerable military power and its robust nuclear deterrent—neither America's territorial integrity, its military power, its economicprosperity,nor its core political values would be jeopardized. By contrast, if oilexports from the Persian Gulf oil were significantly reduced, the effects onAmerica's

well-being would be profound. The United States does not supportIsrael's existence because it makes Americans more secure, but ratherbecause Americans recognize the long history of Jewish suffering andbelieve that it is desirable for the Jewish people to have their own state. Aswe have noted repeatedly, there is a strong moral case for supporting Israel'sexistence, and we believe the United States should remain committed tocoming to Israel's aid if its survival were in jeopardy. But Americans shoulddo this because they think it is morally appropriate, not because it is vital totheir own security.

A DIFFERENT STRATEGY: THE CASE FOR "OFFSHORE BALANCING"

Since 9/11, the United States has pursued a policy of regional transformationin the Middle East. In pursuit of this remarkably ambitious strategy, the Bushadministration has kept large numbers of American troops in the region,something the United States never did during the Cold War. This misguidedpolicy has helped fuel America's terrorism problem and led to the ongoing de

bade in Iraq. It has also done serious damage to the United States'reputationaround the world, including its relationship with European and Arab allies.

America would be best served if it abandoned regional transformationand adopted a strategy of offshore balancing. This strategy would be less ambitiousin scope but much more effective at protecting U.S. interests in the

Middle East. In this strategy, the United States would deploy its militarypower—especially its ground forces—abroad only when there are directthreats to vital U.S. interests and only when local actors cannot handle thesethreats on their own.3 Washington would remain diplomatically engaged underthis approach, relying on air and naval power to signal its continuedcommitment to the region and to provide the capacity to respond quickly tounexpected threats. It would also maintain a robust intervention capability,along the lines of the original Rapid Deployment Force, whose units werestationed over the horizon or in the United States.

Offshore balancing is America's traditional grand strategy and was a keycomponent of U.S. Middle East policy for much of the Cold War. TheUnited States did not try to garrison the region and never attempted totransform it along democratic lines. Instead, it sought to maintain a regionalbalance of power by backing various local allies and by developing the capacityto intervene directly if the local balance of power broke down. TheUnited States built the Rapid Deployment Force to deter or defeat a Sovietattempt to seize the oil-rich Persian Gulf, and Washington tilted toward Iraqin the 1980s to help contain revolutionary Iran. But when Iraq's conquest ofKuwait in 1990 threatened to tilt the local balance of power in Saddam's favor,the United States assembled a multinational coalition and sent a largearmy to smash Saddam's military machine and liberate Kuwait.

Offshore balancing is the right strategy for at least three reasons. First, itmarkedly reduces, but does not eliminate, the chances that the UnitedStates will get involved in bloody and costly wars like Iraq. Not only doesthis strategy categorically reject using military force to reshape the MiddleEast, it also recognizes that the United States does not need to control thisvitally important region; it merely needs to ensure that no other countrydoes. Toward that end, the strategy calls for husbanding U.S. resources andrelying primarily on local allies to contain their dangerous neighbors. As anoffshore balancer, the United States intervenes only as a matter of last resort.And when it does, it finishes the job as quickly as possible and thenmoves back offshore.

Second, offshore balancing will ameliorate America's terrorism problem.

One of the key lessons of the twentieth century is that nationalism and otherforms of local identity remain intensely powerful political forces, and foreignoccupiers invariably generate fierce resistance.4 By

keeping U.S. militaryforces over the horizon until they are needed, offshore balancing minimizesthe resentment created when American troops are permanently stationed onArab soil. This resentment often manifests itself in terrorism or even largescaleinsurgencies directed at the United States.

Third, unlike regional transformation, offshore balancing gives states likeIran and Syria less reason to worry about an American attack and thus lessreason to acquire WMD. The need to deter U.S. intervention is one reasonIran has sought a nuclear capability, and convincing Tehran to reversecourse will require Washington to address Iran's legitimate security concernsand to refrain from issuing overt threats. The United States cannotafford to disengage completely from the Middle East, but a strategy of offshorebalancing will make American involvement less threatening to statesin the region and might even encourage some of our current adversaries toseek our help. Instead of lumping potential foes together in an "axis of evil"and encouraging them to join forces against us, offshore balancing facilitatesa strategy of divide and conquer. Because U.S. interests are served so longas no hostile state or coalition is able to threaten a vital region such as thePersian Gulf, this basic approach makes good strategic sense.

In effect, a strategy of offshore balancing would reverse virtually all ofAmerica s current regional policies. Instead of continuing the fruitless effortto transform Iraq into a multiethnic and multisectarian democracy, theUnited States would withdraw as soon as possible and focus on containingthe regional consequences of its foolhardy decision to invade. Instead of tryingto topple the Assad regime in Syria, the United States would push Israelto give up the Golan Heights in exchange for a formal peace treaty. Not onlywould this bring Syria into the ranks of Arab countries that have formally accepted

Israel's existence, but it would isolate Hezbollah in Lebanon, drive awedge between Syria and Iran, and reduce Iran's ability to aid Hezbollah,Hamas, and Islamic Jihad. It would also encourage Damascus to help theUnited States deal with al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

Finally, instead of threatening Iran with preventive war—an approachthat fuels Iran's desire for WM D and allows President Ahmadinejad to usenationalist sentiment to deflect popular discontent —the United Stateswould try to cut a deal on Iran's nuclear ambitions and put its hard-line leaderson the defensive. This approach would not eliminate all of the problemsthat the United States currently faces in the region, but it would be better

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

for America and Israel than the policies endorsed by most groups in thelobby We have tried their approach, and its failure is plain to see.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP: TREAT ISRAEL AS A NORMAL STATE

But what about Israel? What does offshore balancing say about U.S. relationswith Israel, especially since it is of little strategic value for America?

The Jewish state is nearly sixty years old, and its existence is now recognizedand accepted by almost all countries in the world. Its economyis developing rapidly and most Israelis are increasingly prosperous, eventhough its political system currently seems paralyzed by internal divisions,troubled by corruption, and rocked by repeated scandals. It is time for theUnited States to treat Israel not as a special case but as a normal state, andto deal with it much as it deals with any other country. In other words, theUnited States should support Israel's continued existence—just as it supportsthe existence of France, Thailand, or Mexico—and Washingtonshould be prepared to intervene if Israel's survival were ever threatened.

Treating Israel as a normal state means no longer pretending that Israel'sand America's interests are identical, or acting as if Israel deserves steadfast

U.S. support no matter what it does. When Israel acts in ways that theUnited States deems desirable, it should have American backing. When itdoes not, Israel should expect to face U.S. opposition, just as

other states do.It also implies that the United States should gradually wean Israel from theeconomic and military aid that it currently provides. Israel is now an advancedeconomy, and it will become even more so once it achieves full peacewith its neighbors and reaches a final settlement with the Palestinians.The United States would continue to trade with Israel, of course, andAmerican and Israeli investors would undoubtedly continue to finance enterprisesin each other's countries. Cultural, educational, and scientific exchangeswould continue as they do today, and for the same reasons that theUnited States has extensive social connections with many other countries.The special personal and family connections between Israelis and Americanswould remain intact as well. U.S. arms manufacturers would still be able tosell arms to Israel (as they do to other states in the region, subject to therelevantU.S. laws), and Washington and Jerusalem would undoubtedly shareintelligence information and maintain other mutually beneficial forms of securitycooperation. But there is little reason to continue the handouts thatAmerican taxpayers have provided since the early 1970s, especially when

there are many countries that have greater needs. Ultimately, U.S. aid is indirectlysubsidizing activities that are not in its national interest. Although theUnited States may have to offer some additional support in order to persuadeIsrael to grant the Palestinians a viable state, treating Israel as a normal countryshould eventually lead to a dramatic reduction in U.S. assistance.

ENDING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Above all, the United States should use its considerable leverage to bringthe Israeli-Palestinian conflict to an end. As the bipartisan Iraq Study Group

noted in December 2006, "There must be a renewed and sustained commitmentby the United States to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on allfronts: Lebanon, Syria, and President Bush's June 2002 commitment to atwo-state solution for Israel and Palestine . . . The United States does itsally Israel no favors in avoiding direct involvement to solve the Arab-Israeliconflict."5

U.S. leaders have been engaged in virtually every aspect of the peaceprocess, but they have never used the full leverage at their disposal to pushthe process forward. While reaffirming its commitment to Israel's securitywithin its pre-1967 borders, the United States should make it clear that itis dead set against Israel's expansionist settlements policy—including theland-grabbing "security fence"—and that it believes this policy is not inAmerica's or Israel's long-term interests.This approach means abandoning the Bush administration's moribundRoad Map (which emphasized a timetable for negotiations) and instead layingout America's own vision for what a just peace would entail. In particular,the United States should make it clear that Israel must withdraw fromalmost all of the territories it occupied in June 1967 in exchange for fullpeace. Israel and the Palestinians will also have to reach agreement on therights of displaced Palestinians to return to the lands they fled in 1948. Allowingthis "right" to be exercised in full would threaten Israel's identity andis clearly infeasible. But the basic principle is both an essential issue of justiceand an issue on which the Palestinians will not compromise save in thecontext of a final settlement. To resolve this dilemma, Israel will have toacknowledgea "right" of return—in effect acknowledging that Israel's creationinvolved the violation of Palestinian rights—and the Palestinians will have toagree to renounce this right in perpetuity in exchange for an appropriatelevel of compensation. The United States and the European Union could

organize and finance a generous program of reconstruction aid to compensatethe Palestinians, which would terminate all claims for their actual returninto what is now and will forever remain Israeli territory.

It is sometimes said that Israel cannot make such concessions, becauseit is small and vulnerable and would be even more so were it to grant thePalestinians a viable state. But this familiar argument ignores how much Israel'sstrategic situation has changed since its early years (when, we shouldnot forget, it still managed to defeat its

various adversaries, and with littleassistancefrom the United States). Israel is far more secure now than it waswhen it first occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in June 1967. Israel'sdefense spending in that year was less than half the combined defense expendituresof Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Syria; today, Israel has signed peacetreaties with Egypt and Jordan, Iraq is occupied by the United States andhas little or no military power of its own, and Israel's defense budget isgreater than Iran and Syria's combined. Israel's adversaries used to get substantialmilitary aid from the Soviet Union; today, that superpower is goneand Israel's ties to the United States have grown. Israel had no usable nuclearweapons in 1967; today it has perhaps two hundred. Within the 1967borders, in short, Israel is more secure than it has ever been, and it is itscontinued presence in the Occupied Territories—as well as the GolanHeights—that creates a serious security problem for Israel, primarily in theform of terrorist violence. Israel's supporters in the United States are doingit no favors by pressing Washington to continue subsidizing the occupation.

Some Israelis and Americans argue that the converse is true, that Israel'ssecurity situation is more perilous today than at any time since 1967. Inparticular,they argue that Islamic groups like Hamas and Hezbollah remaindedicated to Israel's destruction and are strongly backed by Syria and Iran,thereby creating a potentially lethal threat. There are two obvious responsesto this line of argument. First, this view overstates the threat that terrorismposes to Israel—it is clearly a problem but not an existential threat—and, asdiscussed in Chapters 2 and 10, it also exaggerates the threat that IranianWMD represent. Second, and more important, ending the occupationwould also help divide and defuse the coalition of forces that doomsayers

now see arrayed against Israel. Syria has made it clear it will make peace ifit regains the Golan, and once it has its land back, it has promised to cut offsupport for Hezbollah and Hamas. Ending the occupation and helping createa viable Palestinian state will deprive Iran of local sympathizers and helpturn groups like Hamas or Islamic Jihad from heroic defenders of a nationalcause into outdated obstacles to progress and prosperity.

The United States has ample justification for pressuring Israel to cut thisdeal: so long as it is bankrolling Israel, and jeopardizing its own security bydoing so, it is entitled to say what it is willing to support and what it is goingto oppose. The Clinton parameters laid out in December 2000 identify thebasic outlines of a settlement and offer the best baseline for new negotiations,and President Bush and his successor should make it clear that this isour starting point. If a final status agreement can be reached, then theUnited States and the European Union should be willing to subsidize thenew arrangements generously and help Israeli and Palestinian leaders dealwith the rejectionists on both sides.

Ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would contribute to America's nationalinterests in another way. Despite its military prowess and geographiclocation, Israel's strategic value to the United States is reduced by its ownpariah status within the region. So long as the Palestinians are denied a state,Israel's isolation prevents it from participating whenever the United States istrying to assemble a "coalition of the willing." If the conflict were resolvedand normal relations developed between Israel and the Arab world—as thecurrent Arab League peace proposal envisions—then the United Stateswould not pay a diplomatic price for backing Israel, and Israel would be ableto join forces with the United States and its Arab allies when serious regionalthreats emerged. If the conflict were resolved, in short, Israel might becomethe sort of strategic asset that its supporters often claim it is.

If Israel remains unwilling to grant the Palestinians a viable state —or ifit tries to impose an unjust solution unilaterally—then the United Statesshould curtail its economic and military support. It should do so not becauseit bears Israel any ill will but because it recognizes that the occupation is badfor the United States and contrary to America's political values. Consistentwith the strategy of offshore balancing, the United States would base its actionson its own

self-interest rather than adhere to a blind allegiance to anuncooperative partner. In effect, the United States should give Israel achoice: end its self-defeating occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and remaina close U.S. ally, or remain a colonial power on its own.

This step is not as radical as it might sound: the United States wouldsimply be dealing with Israel the same way that it has dealt with other colonialdemocracies in the past. For example, the United States pushed Britainand France to give up their colonial empires in the early years of the ColdWar and forced them (and Israel) to withdraw from Egyptian territory followingthe 1956 Suez War. The United States has also played hardball withplenty of other countries—including close allies like Japan, Germany, and

South Korea—when it was in its interest do so. As discussed in Chapter 7,public opinion polls confirm that the American people would support a presidentwho took a harder line toward Israel, if doing so were necessary toachieve a just and enduring peace.

This policy would undoubtedly be anathema to most—though perhapsnot all—elements in the lobby and it would probably anger some otherAmericans as well. Moreover, present circumstances are hardly promising,given the violent divisions within the Palestinian community, the politicalweakness of Israel's current leaders, the Bush administration's abysmal trackrecord in the region, and the eroding support for a two-state solution withinIsrael itself. Even some of the staunchest supporters of a negotiated twostatesolution now lament that "the idea that negotiations conducted bilaterallybetween Israelis and Palestinians somehow can produce a finalagreement is dead."6

But the question must be asked: What is the alternative? What vision ofthe future do hard-line defenders of Israel have to offer instead?

Given present circumstances, there are three possible alternatives to thetwo-state solution sketched above. First, Israel could expel the Palestiniansfrom its pre-1967 lands and from the Occupied Territories, thereby preservingits Jewish character through an overt act of ethnic cleansing. Although afew Israeli hard-liners—including current Deputy Prime Minister AvigdorLieberman—have advocated variants on this approach, to do so would be acrime against humanity and no genuine friend of Israel could support sucha heinous course of action. If this is what opponents of a two-state solutionare advocating, they should say so explicitly. This form of ethnic cleansingwould not end the conflict, however; it would merely reinforce the Palestinians'desire for vengeance and strengthen those extremists who still reject Israel'sright to exist.

Second, instead of separate Jewish and Palestinian states living side byside, Mandate Palestine could become a democratic binational state inwhich both peoples enjoyed equal political rights. This solution has beensuggested by a handful of Jews and a growing number of Israeli Arabs.7 Thepractical obstacles to this option are daunting, however, and binationalstates do not have an encouraging track record. This option also meansabandoning the original Zionist vision of a Jewish state. There is little reasonto think that Israel's Jewish citizens would voluntarily accept this solution,and one can also safely assume that individuals and groups in the lobbywould have virtually no interest in this outcome. We do not believe it is afeasible or appropriate solution ourselves.

The final alternative is some form of apartheid, whereby Israel continuesto increase its control over the Occupied Territories but allows the Palestiniansto exercise limited autonomy in a set of disconnected and economicallycrippled statelets.8 Israelis invariably bristle at the comparison to white rule inSouth Africa, but that is the future they face if they try to control all of MandatePalestine while denying full political rights to an Arab population that willsoon outnumber the Jewish population in the entirety of the land. In any case,the apartheid option is not a viable long-term solution either, because it ismorally repugnant and because the Palestinians will continue to resist untilthey get a state of their own. This situation will force Israel to escalate therepressivepolicies that have already cost it significant blood and treasure, encouragedpolitical corruption, and

badly tarnished its global image.9

These possibilities are the only alternatives to a two-state solution, andno one who wishes Israel well should be enthusiastic about any of them.Given the harm that this conflict is inflicting on Israel, the United States,and especially the Palestinians, it is in everyone's interest to end this tragedyonce and for all. Put differently, resolving this long and bitter conflict shouldnot be seen as a desirable option at some point down the road, or as a goodway for U.S. presidents to polish their legacies and garner Nobel PeacePrizes. Rather, ending the conflict should be seen as a national security priorityfor the United States. But this will not happen as long as the lobbymakes it impossible for American leaders to use the leverage at their disposalto pressure Israel into ending the occupation and creating a viablePalestinian state.

The U.S. presidents who have made the greatest contribution to MiddleEast peace—Jimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush—were able to do so preciselybecause each was willing on occasion to chart a separate course fromthe lobby As former Israeli foreign minister Shlomo Ben-Ami has written,"Carter had yet another vital advantage. A rare bird among politicians, andespecially among residents of the White House, he was not especially sensitiveor attentive to Jewish voices and lobbies .. . As it turned out, it wasthis kind of President—George [H. W] Bush in the late 1980s is anothercase in point—who was ready to confront Israel head on and overlook thesensibilities of her friends in America that managed eventually to producemeaningful breakthroughs on the way to an Arab-Israeli peace."1 0 Ben-Amiis correct, and his important insight underscores once again how the lobby's

efforts have unwittingly undermined Israel's own interests.

The United States will have to put significant pressure on Israel to get it toaccept the creation of a viable Palestinian state, which in practice means ac

cepting a solution within the Clinton parameters. Although the Barak governmentaccepted these parameters—albeit with significant reservations—inJanuary 2001, broad support for the key elements of this solution is at presentlacking. While a majority of Israelis—55 percent in 2007—support the establishmentof a Palestinian state in principle, a recent survey reveals much lesssupport for the main ingredients of the peace settlement described by PresidentClinton in December 2000. In particular, only 41 percent of Israelis supportcreating a Palestinian state on 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza,even if Israel was allowed to keep its large settlement blocs. Just 37 percentwould support transferring the Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem to thePalestinians, while only 22 percent favor transferring control of the JordanRiver Valley to a Palestinian state in a few years. Finally, 27 percent supportgiving control of the Temple Mount to the Palestinians (with Israel retainingcontrol of the Western Wall), and a mere 17 percent favor allowing a limitednumber of refugees to return to Israel.1 1 In effect, there is widespread oppositionin Israel to creating a viable Palestinian state, which means that any futurepresident who hopes to settle this conflict will have to lean hard on Israelto change its thinking about how to achieve a two-state solution.

Israel's intransigence and the lobby's influence are not the only obstaclesto a peaceful settlement, of course, and ending the conflict will require theUnited States (and others) to pressure the Palestinians as well. This will bemuch easier to do if the Palestinians and key Arab states see the UnitedStates as genuinely committed to a just peace and willing to act as an honestbroker, instead of operating as "Israel's lawyer." A genuine effort to end theconflict—as opposed to the Bush administration's halfhearted commitmentto the Road Map or Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's meaningless regionalvisits—will force the Palestinians to make a real choice. As it standsnow, there is little reason for the Palestinians not to support groups likeHamas, because the possibility of meaningful negotiations is remote and supportingthe most radical groups costs little in the way of missed opportunities.But if the United States presses hard to help them gain a viable state,

andHamas is exposed as the main obstacle to that end, then the Palestinianswould be more likely to turn against Hamas and seize the olive branch.

Israel's American backers need to recognize that denying the Palestinianstheir legitimate political rights has not made Israel safer, and those who havelobbied hardest for unconditional U.S. backing have ultimately nurtured Israeliand Palestinian extremism and inflicted unintended hardships on thevery country that they seek to support. It is high time to abandon this bankruptpolicy and pursue a different course.

The policies sketched here are no panacea, and they will not eliminateall the problems currently facing the United States in the Middle East.Achieving a final peace between Israel and the Palestinians will require allthe parties to engage in difficult and probably violent confrontations withrejectionistson both sides. Israeli-Palestinian peace is not a wonder drug thatwill solve all the region's problems: it will by itself neither eliminate anti-Semitism in the region nor lead Arab elites to tackle the other problems thatafflict their societies with new energy and commitment. But ending the conflictand adopting a more normal relationship with Israel will help theUnited States rebuild its image in the Arab and Islamic world and put it in aposition where it can more credibly encourage the various reforms that arebadly needed elsewhere in the region.

Some may argue that the problems the United States currently faces inthe Middle East are an aberration, due primarily to the influence of one factionin the lobby—the neoconservatives. Once President Bush's second

term is over and the neoconservatives are out of power, one might hope,

U.S. foreign policy will revert to more sensible positions and America's regionalposition will quickly improve.This hopeful forecast, alas, is too optimistic. Although a number ofprominent neoconservatives no longer serve in government, they are still activein current policy debates. Some of them are advising 2008 presidentialcandidates and they remain a ubiquitous presence in the mainstream media.To date, few neoconservatives seem chastened by the havoc their policieshave wrought, and even fewer have expressed any remorse about the humancosts of their misguided advice. The think tanks that support them are stillflourishing and influential inside the Beltway and will continue to influenceAmerican foreign policy after the next election.

Equally important, many of the major organizations in the lobby remaincommitted to the same policy agenda: steadfast support for an expansionistIsrael at the expense of the Palestinians, confrontation with Israel's adversariesfor the purpose of either fundamentally changing each country's foreignpolicy or toppling the regime, and maintaining a substantial Americanpresence in the region over the longer term. As previously noted, none of themajor presidential candidates has proposed a significant alteration in U.S.Middle East policy, and certainly nothing like the strategy we have outlinedhere. Thus, anyone who believes that the 2008 election will lead tomarkedly different policies is likely to be disappointed. This situation raisesthe obvious question: can anything be done to break the lobby's hold?

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

DEALING WITH THE LOBBY

In theory, there are four ways to mitigate the lobby's negative influence. First,one could try to weaken the lobby, either by reducing its resources or by removingsome of its avenues of influence. Second, other groups could try tocounter the lobby's influence over elected officials and the policy-makingprocess, thereby shifting U.S. policy to a more evenhanded position. Third,academics and the media could confront the lobby's various arguments, in orderto correct enduring myths and expose the weaknesses in the lobby's policypreferences. Finally, the lobby itself might evolve in a positive direction,retaining its current influence but advocating a different set of policies.

Weakening the Lobby?The lobby would be less influential if it no longer enjoyed generous financialsupport, or if its ability to direct campaign contributions and to pressure mediaorganizations declined. Neither of these developments is realistic, however,because it is not likely to lose wealthy and generous supporters anytimesoon. Although the number of Americans who are unconditionally committedto Israel is declining, there will almost certainly be a sufficient numberwho feel strongly enough to give large sums to support the lobby's leadingorganizations.Banning such contributions is unlikely and would probably beillegal. Plus, trying to restrict support for pro-Israel groups would clearly beanti-Semitic, as all Americans are within their rights to contribute to anylegitimate cause.

The obvious way to reduce the lobby's influence (along with other specialinterest groups) is campaign finance reform. Public financing of all electionswould seriously weaken the link between the lobby and electedofficials and make it easier for the latter to pressure Israel (or simply withdrawU.S. support) when doing so would be in America's interest. Such astep would not eliminate the lobby's influence, as politicians would stillcourt Jewish and Christian Zionist voters, and groups and individuals withinthe lobby could still press their case with U.S. officials and work to shapepublic opinion. Campaign finance reform would almost certainly attenuateits influence, however, and would encourage more open deliberations withinthe corridors of power.

Unfortunately, the prospects for meaningful campaign finance reformare dim. Incumbents have too great a stake in the current system, and plentyof other special interest groups would join forces to resist any effort to revise

the system that currently gives them disproportionate influence. It wouldprobably take a bevy of Jack Abramoff-style scandals to convince Americansto purge private money from the electoral process. In the short term, tryingto weaken the lobby directly is not going to work.

Countering the Lobby?Creating a "counterlobby" to balance the Israel lobby is also likely to fail. Asdiscussed in Chapter 4, Arab-American and Muslim groups are muchweaker than the organizations in the Israel lobby, and the vaunted oil lobbyexerts much less influence on foreign and national security policy than iscommonly believed. Other countervailing organizations—such as the nonpartisanCouncil for the National Interest or Americans for Middle EastUnderstanding—are also significantly smaller and less well financed thanthe Israel lobby.

But even if these various groups were bigger and richer, they would stillfind it hard to overcome the collective action dynamics that lie at the heart ofinterest group politics. As noted earlier, pro-Israel groups succeed in part becausetheir members place an especially high priority on backing Israel,which means that they tend to engage in single-issue politics—backing onlycandidates whose pro-Israel credentials are well established. Even if manyAmericans are aware that unconditional support for Israel is not in America'snational interest, this issue is not the top priority for most of them, and thereare significant differences among the various groups that are either skepticalof unconditional aid to Israel or strongly opposed to it. As a result, trying tobalance the lobby's influence by pulling these disparate groups into a sufficientlycohesive coalition is not a promising strategy. We would also view attemptsto form an explicitly "anti-Israel" lobby with grave misgivings, as thissort of group could easily foster a resurgence of genuine anti-Semitism.

Fostering More Open DiscourseThe third option, which is much more promising than the first two, is to encouragea more open debate about these issues, in order to correct existingmyths about the Middle East and to force groups in the lobby to defendtheir positions in the face of a well-informed opposition. In particular, Americansneed to understand the real history of Israel's founding and the truestory of its subsequent conduct. Instead of passively accepting the LeonUris version of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Americans need to absorb and reflecton the findings of Israel's "new historians," whose courageous scholarshiphas shed much-needed light on what the Zionists' campaign to build a

Jewish state in the midst of an indigenous Arab population entailed. Althoughthe two situations are hardly identical, one cannot understand Zionismwithout understanding the long history of Christian anti-Semitism, andone cannot fathom contemporary Palestinian nationalism without beingaware of the events surrounding the 1948 war, which Israelis call the War ofIndependence but Palestinians call al-Nakba, or "the Catastrophe."1 2

Because most Americans are only dimly aware of the crimes committedagainst the Palestinians, they see their continued resistance as an irrationaldesire for vengeance, or as evidence of unwarranted hatred of Jews akin tothe anti-Semitism that was endemic in old Europe. Ignorance about thepast also encourages Americans to reject the Palestinians' demands forcompensation—especially the right of return—as utterly unjustified. Althoughwe deplore the Palestinians' reliance on terrorism and are well awareof their own contribution to prolonging the conflict, we believe their grievancesare genuine and must be addressed, even if, as noted above, some oftheir aspirations (such as the unrestricted right of return) will have to go unmetor be resolved in other ways. We also believe most Americans wouldsupport a different approach to the conflict if they had a more accurateunderstandingof past events and present conditions.

As the primary source of independent thinking in democratic societies,scholars and journalists should be encouraged to resist the lobby's efforts to

shape public discourse and to encourage more open discussion of these importantissues. The objective is not to single out Israel for criticism or to challengethe legitimacy of the Jewish state, but rather to help Americans gain amore accurate picture of how past behavior casts a giant shadow over the present.Israel will still have plenty of vocal defenders—as it should—but Americawould be better served if its citizens were exposed to the range of views aboutIsrael common to most of the world's democracies, including Israel itself.

Journalists have a particular responsibility to ask hard questions duringpolitical campaigns. As noted at the beginning of this book, virtually all themajor presidential candidates began the 2008 campaign by expressing astrong personal commitment to Israel and by making it clear that they favorunconditional U.S. support for the Jewish state and a confrontational approachtoward its adversaries. Politicians should not get a free pass whenthey utter the usual pro-Israel platitudes. Reporters and commentatorsshould insist that those who aspire to be president explain why they favorsuch strong support for Israel and ask if they support a two-state solutionand will push hard for it once elected. The candidates should also be askedto consider whether a more conditional U.S. policy—for example, one that

linked American military aid to genuine progress toward peace—might begood for the United States and Israel alike. And it should be fair game to askthose who aspire to the highest office in the land if their views have beeninfluencedby campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs or individuals,just as one might legitimately ask about the impact of contributions receivedfrom oil companies, labor unions, or drug manufacturers.

To foster a more open discussion, Americans of all backgrounds must rejectthe silencing tactics that some groups and individuals in the lobby continueto employ. Stifling debate and smearing opponents is inconsistent withthe principles of vigorous and open dialogue on which democracy depends,and continued reliance on this undemocratic tactic runs the risk of generatinga hostile backlash at some point in the future.

We condemn all attempts to silence legitimate forms of discussion anddebate—including the occasional efforts to silence pro-Israel voices—andwe hope that this book will contribute to a more open exchange of views onthese difficult problems. Both the United States

and Israel face vexing challengesin dealing with the many problems in the Middle East, and neithercountry will benefit by silencing those who support a new approach. Thisdoes not mean that critics are always right, of course, but their suggestionsdeserve at least as much consideration as the failed policies that key groupsin the lobby have backed in recent years.

A New Israel Lobby?

Convincing groups within the lobby to support a different agenda would alsoadvance the U.S. national interest. In practice, this development could involvestrengthening more moderate forces that already exist—such as theIsrael Policy Forum or Americans for Peace Now—or by creating newpro-Israel groups that support different policies. U.S. and Israeli interestswould also be advanced by wresting power away from the hard-liners whonow control AIPAC, the Zionist Organization of America, the Conference ofPresidents, or the American Jewish Committee. Such efforts might also bestrengthened by institutional reforms that would give the rank and file agreater voice in determining these organizations' policy positions.

Of course, this scenario requires both leaders and members of these organizationsto recognize that the policies that many of them have backed inrecent years have been in neither America's nor Israel's interest. They mustalso come to understand that clinging to these positions may condemn Israelto an even bleaker future. More sensible voices in the Jewish communitywill have to discard the taboo against public criticism of Israel and challenge

Israeli policies that are harmful to Israel and may even be harmful to Jews inthe diaspora as well. We agree with Rabbi Ben-Zion Gold, director emeritusof Harvard University Hillel, who wrote in 2002 that "American Jews, whoare the largest Diaspora community, have to discover their own focus . . .Those of us who criticize Israel do so because Israel is an important part ofour identity, because criticism is an integral part of our traditional culture. . . We offer it as an expression of respect and love for the people of Israel."1 3 Or as the Economist recently observed, "Helping Israel should nolonger mean defending it uncritically . . . Diaspora institutions should . . .feel free to criticize Israeli politicians who preach racism and intolerance. . . [and] encourage lively debate about Israeli policies."14

Indeed, current conditions in the Middle East pose a serious dilemmafor the more hard-line elements in the lobby. Instead of defending a weakstate surrounded by enemies, created in the aftermath of a great historicaltragedy, they are now forced to defend a powerful, modern, and prosperousstate that is using its superior force to confiscate land from the Palestiniansand to deny them full political rights, while dealing harshly with troubledneighbors such as Lebanon. When this behavior prompts criticism fromsensible moderates, these groups are forced to try to smear and marginalizepeople who are obviously neither extremists nor anti-Semites. Condemningneo-Nazis or Holocaust deniers is a worthy enterprise, but smearing respectedindividuals such as Jimmy Carter, Richard Cohen, Tony Kushner, orTony Judt, or attacking progressive groups like the Union of ConcernedZionists, is something very different and disturbing. The more the lobby'shard-liners attack any and all critics, the more they reveal themselves to beout of step with the broad American commitment to free speech and opendiscussion. And once virtually any criticism of Israel becomes equated withanti-Semitism, the charge itself threatens to become meaningless.

Convincing hard-line Christian Zionists to abandon their commitmentto a greater Israel is less likely, given the central role that prophecies aboutthe end-time play in dispensationalist theology, and given their apparentwillingness to see the Middle East engulfed in a highly destructive "apocalyptic"war. Hope may be found in the tendency for evangelicals' agendas toshift in the perennial quest for new members and in the general tendencyfor these movements to fluctuate in strength over time. The next presidentis unlikely to be as sympathetic to these groups as George W. Bush hasbeen, especially given the disastrous results that Bush's Middle East policieshave produced. Jews in Israel and America may also realize that

ChristianZionism is a dubious ally—especially when they consider the unappealing

role they are expected to play in the end-time—and begin to distance themselvesfrom the evangelicals' embrace.1 5 For their part, Christian evangelicalsshould be encouraged to reflect on the human tragedy that Israelcontinues to inflict on the Palestinians and to consider whether their owncommitment to a "greater Israel" is truly consistent with Christ's message oflove and brotherhood.

Redirecting the lobby's agenda may seem far-fetched, but some of theseorganizations supported different policies in the past and there is no reasonto assume that their current preferences are set in stone. Indeed, there aresigns of growing disenchantment with the positions espoused by the majorJewish organizations and a renewed effort to cultivate Jewish voices thatbetter reflect mainstream Jewish opinion. Groups like the Israel PolicyForum, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, and Americans for Peace Now have becomemore visible and effective, and are reportedly pondering a merger designedto enhance their influence and encourage greater U.S. effort toward a twostatesolution. A number of prominent American Jews have also consideredfounding a new lobbying group explicitly intended to provide a more reasonablealternative to AIPAC.1 6

Similar movements are occurring in other countries as well. In February2007, a group of British Jews founded a new organization, Independent JewishVoices (IJV), which favors the universal application of human rights lawand a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. IJV condemnsanti-Semitism, anti-Arabism, and Islamophobia, and was founded "in thebelief that the broad spectrum of opinion among the Jewish population of

this country is not reflected by those institutions which claim authority torepresent the Jewish community as a whole." IJV's founding declaration alsoemphasized that "the battle against anti-Semitism is vital and is underminedwhenever opposition to Israeli government policies is automatically brandedas anti-Semitic."1 7

In Australia, Jews who are critical of Israeli policy and have found it difficultto voice their views have formed an organization called IndependentAustralian Jewish Voices. In November 2006, twenty-five peace researchersin Germany called for questioning the "special relationship" between Germanyand Israel, because of Israel's actions against the Palestinians. A fewmonths later, in March 2007, a heated controversy broke out within theGerman Jewish community when a small group of Jews issued "Berlin DeclarationShalom 5767," which, according to the Forward, criticized Israelipolicy in the Occupied Territories and "the limits of open debate on mattersin relation to the Middle East."1 8 Initiatives like these remind us that the

policy positions espoused by the most influential groups in the lobby do notrepresent the views of all (or even most) diaspora Jews, and they give reasonto hope that many groups within the lobby might eventually bring their influenceto bear in more constructive ways.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Israel's creation and subsequent development is a remarkable achievement.Had American Jews not organized on Israel's behalf and convinced importantpoliticians to support their objectives, Israel might never have been established.U.S. and Israeli interests have never been identical, however, andIsrael's current policies are at odds with America's own national interestsand certain core U.S. values. Unfortunately, in recent years the lobby's politicalclout and public relations acumen have discouraged U.S. leaders frompursuing Middle East policies that would advance American interests andprotect Israel from its worst mistakes. The lobby's influence, in short, hasbeen bad for both countries.

There is, nonetheless, a silver lining in America's current plight. Becausethe costs of these failed policies are now so apparent, we have an opportunityfor reflection and renewal. Although the lobby remains a powerful politicalforce, its adverse impact is increasingly hard to overlook. A country asrich and powerful as the United States can

sustain flawed policies for quitesome time, but reality cannot be ignored forever.

What is needed, therefore, is a candid but civilized discussion of thelobby's influence and a more open debate about U.S. interests in this vital region.Israel's well-being is one of those interests—on moral grounds—but itscontinued presence in the Occupied Territories is not. Open debate andmore wide-ranging media coverage will reveal the problems that the current"special relationship" creates and encourage the United States to pursue policiesmore in line with its own national interest, with the interests of otherstates in the region, and, we firmly believe, with Israel's interest as well.

NOTES

Unless otherwise noted, references to the following publications and news agenciesare to their onlineversions: American Prospect, Associated Press, Boston Globe, Chicago Sun-Times,Chicago Tribune,Christian Science Monitor, Daily Telegraph (London), Financial Times, Forward,Guardian,Haaretz, Independent, International Herald Tribune, Inter Press Service, JerusalemPost, JewishWeek, Los Angeles Times, Nation, Newsweek, New York Review of Books, New York Sun,New YorkTimes, Observer, Reuters, Sunday Telegraph (London), Sunday Times (London), Time,Times (London),USA Today, U.S. News & World Report, Wall Street Journal, Washington Monthly,

WashingtonPost, Washington Times, and Weekly Standard. We have also accessed some publicationsvia theLexis-Nexis, FACTIVA, or JSTOR digital archives.

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argument, which he has made explicit in public presentations, is the idea that U.S.involve

ment in the Middle East long predates the creation of Israel and therefore currentAmeri

can support for the Jewish state has little to do with the activities

of the Israellobby. For a

characteristic public statement to this effect, see Oren's address to the 2007 AIPACPolicy

Conference, where he described AIPAC itself as "an expression of a nearly400-year-long

tradition in which the idea of a United States is virtually indivisible andinseparable from

the idea of a re-created Jewish state. It is the embodiment of a conviction as old asthis na

tion itself that belief in the Jewish state is tantamount to belief in these UnitedStates." This

odd argument ignores how much the U.S. role in the Middle East has changed since1776,

and especially since 1948 and 1967. For the transcript, seewww.aipac.org/Publications/

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6. As the historian Peter L. Hahn puts it, "Prior to World War II, the United Statestook relativelylittle official interest in the Middle East. Although the European empires had longengagedin the so-called Eastern Question—a diplomatic rivalry for dominance in the MiddleEast (as well as South Asia)—the government in Washington identified no strategic orpoliticalinterests in the area and thus avoided entanglement in the imperial rivalry there."Seehis Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945(Washington, DC:Potomac Books, 2005), 1.7. Macmillan also writes regarding the disposition of Palestine: "The United States,in contrastto what happened after the Second World War, played a minor role." See Paris 1919:SixMonths That Changed the World (New York: Random House, 2001), 422-23.8. On the origins of Saudi-American security cooperation, see Nadav Safran, SaudiArabia:The Ceaseless Quest for Security (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985),60-68;and Rachel Bronson, Thicker than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia(NewYork: Oxford University Press, 2006), chaps. 1-2. On the Baghdad Pact, see StephenM.Walt, The Origins of Alliances (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 58-59.9. Wieseltier's comment appears in his review of the memoirs of Palestinianintellectual SariNusseibeh. See "Sympathy for the Other," New York Times Book Review, April 1, 2007,13.10. This charge was based on Carter's having written a brief note on a 1987 letter hehad receivedfrom the daughter of a former Nazi prison guard who was protesting her father sdeportation.Carter's one-sentence note expressed no sympathy for the former guard and didnot recommend that any action be taken on his behalf but merely said he hoped theOfficeof Special Investigations (the U.S. agency responsible for prosecuting Nazi-era warcrimes)would give "special consideration to affected families for humanitarian reasons." Yetthisepisode was used to smear Carter as somehow sympathetic to Nazism. See DanielFreedman,"President Carter Interceded on Behalf of Former Nazi Guard," New York Sun, January19, 2007.11. Jodie T. Allen and

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14. This is why Osama bin Laden originally wanted to attack the U.S. Capitol onSeptember 11,2001; he saw it as the leading bastion of support for Israel in the United States."Outline ofthe 9/11 Plot," Staff Statement no. 16, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks UpontheUnited States, June 16, 2004, 4.15. Michael Massing, "The Storm over the Israel Lobby," New York Review of Books,June 8,2006; and Jeffrey Goldberg, "Real Insiders," New Yorker, July 4, 2005.16. As Nadav Safran noted in his book on the U.S.-Israel alliance, "Jews are not thefirst ethnic

or religious group in America that has sought to influence American foreign policy infavorof kinsmen or co-religionists . . . Ethnoreligious politics, like the politics ofinterest groupsin general, have been an inescapable consequence of the pluralism and multiplicity ofinterestsin American life." The United States and Israel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UniversityPress, 1963), 276.

17. Useful works in this extensive literature include Tony Smith, ForeignAttachments: ThePower of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy (Cambridge, MA:HarvardUniversity Press, 2000); Ethnic Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy, ed. M. E. Ahrari(Westport,CT Greenwood Press, 1987); Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy, 2nd ed., ed. A. A.Said(New York: Praeger, 1981); Charles McC. Mathias Jr., "Ethnic Groups and ForeignPolicy,"Foreign Affairs 59, no. 5 (Summer 1981); Alexander DeConde, Ethnicity, Race andAmericanForeign Policy (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992); Yossi Shain, "EthnicDiasporasand U.S. Foreign Policy," Political Science Quarterly 109, no. 5 (1994-95); PaulWatanabe,Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy: The Politics of the TurkishArmsEmbargo (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984); Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush,"The Role of Ethnic Interest Groups in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Case of the Cuban-American National Foundation," International Studies Quarterly 43, no. 2 (June 1999);MaxJ. Castro, "Miami Vise," Nation, May 14, 2007; Gabriel Sheffer, Diaspora Politics: AtHomeAbroad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); David King and Miles Pomper,"Congress and the Contingent Influence of Diaspora Lobbies: Lessons from U.S.ForeignPolicy Toward Azerbaijan and Armenia," Journal of Armenian Studies 8, no. 1 (Summer2004); and R. Hrair Dekmejian and Angelos Themelis, "Ethnic Lobbies in U.S. ForeignPolicy:A Comparative Analysis of the Jewish, Greek, Armenian and Turkish Lobbies,"OccasionalResearch Paper no. 13, Institute of International

Relations, Panteion University ofSocial and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece, October 1997.18. On the history of anti-Semitism, see James Carroll, Constantine's Sword: TheChurch andthe Jews; A History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001); Edward H. Flannery, The Anguishofthe Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Antisemitism, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: PaulistPress,2004); Israel Pocket Library, Anti-Semitism (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974); and MarvinPerry andFrederick Schweitzer, Anti-Semitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present(NewYork: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). On the status and treatment of Jews in the Arabworld, seeBernard Lewis, Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice (New

York:Norton, 1986), chap. 5; and Charles D. Smith, Palestine and the Arab-IsraeliConflict: A Historywith Documents, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 8, 10-11.19. Quoted in The Middle East, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly,1981), 68.20. As an official Indian government committee noted in 2002, "Indo-Americans haveeffectivelymobilized on issues ranging from the nuclear test in 1998 to Kargil, have played acrucialrole in generating a favourable climate of opinion in the [U.S.] Congress . . . andlobbied effectively on other issues of concern . . . For the first time, India has aconstituencyin the United States with real influence and status. The Indian community in theUnitedStates constitutes an invaluable asset in strengthening India's relationship with theworld'sonly superpower." Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (NewDelhi:Government of India, January 2002), xx-xxi.21. In addition to Gephardt's statement, quotations about AI PAC 's influence by BillClinton,Newt Gingrich, and several other prominent figures were previously available atwww.aipac.org/documents/whoweare.html#say (accessed January 14, 2005). AIPAC appears to haveremoved these statements from the current version of its website.22. Alan M. Dershowitz, Chutzpah (Boston: Little, Brown, 1991), 16.23. Quoted in Samuel G. Freedman, "Don't Blame Jews for This War," USA Today, April2, 2003.24. On the role of interest groups in American politics, see Frank R. Baumgartner andBeth L.Leech, Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science(Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1998); Richard L. Hall and Frank W. Wayman, "BuyingTime: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees,"

American Political Science Review 84, no. 3 (September 1990); Richard L. Hall andAlan V.Deardorff, "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy," American Political Science Review 100,no. 1(February 2006); John Mark Hansen, Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby,1919-1981 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Ken Kollman, OutsideLobbying:Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1998);Richard A. Smith, "Interest Group Influence in the U. S. Congress," LegislativeStudiesQuarterly 20, no. 1 (February 1995); Raymond A. Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and LewisAnthonyDexter, American Business and Public Policy: The Politics of Foreign Trade(Cambridge,MA: MIT Press, 1963); David B. Truman, The Governmental Process: Political InterestsandPublic Opinion (New York: Knopf, 1951); and James Q. Wilson, Political Organizations(New

York: Basic Books, 1973).

25. See note 17 above.26. George W. Ball and Douglas B. Ball, The Passionate Attachment: America'sInvolvement withIsrael, 1947 to the Present (New York: Norton, 1992); Mitchell G. Bard, The Water'sEdgeand Beyond: Defining the Limits to Domestic Influence on U.S. Middle East Policy (NewYork:Transaction Books, 1991); Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak Out: People andInstitutionsConfront Israel's Lobby (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill, 1985); J. J. Goldberg, JewishPower:Inside the American Jewish Establishment (New York: Perseus Books, 1996); AnatolLieven,

America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism (New York: OxfordUniversityPress, 2004), chap. 6; Michael Lind, "The Israel Lobby," Prospect 73 (April 2002);Massing, "Storm over the Israel Lobby"; Michael Massing, "The Israel Lobby," Nation,June10, 2002; Michael Massing, "Deal Breakers," American Prospect, March 11, 2002;EdwardTivnan, The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York:Simon &Schuster, 1987); and James Petras, The Power of Israel in the United States (Atlanta,GA:Clarity Press, 2006). We do not agree with every assertion made in these works, buteachcontains useful information about the U.S.-Israeli relationship.27. Steven L. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle EastPolicy fromTruman to Reagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); and Warren Bass,SupportAny Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U.S.-Israeli Alliance (NewYork:Oxford University Press, 2003). Other useful works include Abraham Ben-Zvi, TheUnitedStates and Israel: Limits of the Special Relationship (New York: Columbia UniversityPress,1993); Abraham Ben-Zvi, Decade of Transition: Eisenhower, Kennedy and the Origins oftheAmerican-Israeli Relationship (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Peter L.Hahn,Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945-1961(ChapelHill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); William B. Quandt, Peace Process:AmericanDiplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC:BrookingsInstitution Press, 2004); David Schoenbaum, The United States and the State ofIsrael(New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Peter Grose, Israel in the Mind ofAmerica(New York: Knopf, 1983).28. Among the relevant works are Shlomo Ben-Ami, Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: TheIsraeli-Arab Tragedy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Simha Flapan, The Birth ofIsrael:Myths and Realities (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987); Baruch Kimmerling, Politicide:ArielSharon's War Against the Palestinians (London: Verso, 2003); Benny Morris, RighteousVictims:A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999 (New York: Knopf, 1999); IlanPappe,The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine (Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications, 2006);TomSegev, One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate, trans. HaimWatzman(New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); Tom Segev, 1967: Israel, the War, and the YearThat Transformed the Middle East, trans. Jessica Cohen (New York: MetropolitanBooks,2007); Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (New York: Norton, 2000);andZeev Sternhell, The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism, and the Makingof theJewish State, trans. David Maisel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).29. See, for example, Nur Masalha,

Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of"Transfer" inZionist Political Thought, 1882-1948 (Washington, DC: Institute for PalestineStudies,

1992); Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim, eds., The Warfor Palestine: Rewriting theHistory of1948 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Norman G. Finkelstein, Image and

Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict (London: Verso, 2001); and Rashid Khalidi,The IronCage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood (Boston: Beacon Press,2006).

1: THE GREAT BENEFACTOR1."Address by PM Rabin to the U.S. Congress-26-Jul-94," Israel Ministry of ForeignAffairs,www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Archive/Speeches; and Benjamin Netanyahu, "Speech to JointSessionof Congress, July 10, 1996," www.netanyahu.org/joinsesofusc.html.2.According to the "Greenbook" of the U.S. Agency for International Development(USAID),which reports "overseas loans and grants," Israel received $153,894,700,000 (inconstant2005 dollars) from the United States through 2005. See http://qesdb.usaid.gov/gbk.3.According to the Congressional Research Service, the United States did not provideIsraelwith any direct military assistance between 1949 and 1959. See Clyde Mark, "Israel:U.S.Foreign Assistance," Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, April26,2005, 13-14, Table 3. The United States did sell Israel one hundred recoillessantitank riflesin 1958, partly as a reward for Israel's support during the 1958 Jordan crisis. SeeWarrenBass, Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U.S.-IsraeliAlliance(New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 151 ; and Douglas Little, "The Making of aSpecialRelationship: The United States and Israel, 1957—68," International Journal ofMiddleEast Studies 25, no. 4 (November 1993): 566. William H. Mott IV reports that Israelobtainedfive hundred surplus U.S. half-tracks covertly during the War of Independence andalso received some surplus tanks in 1951-52. Washington also helped subsidizeIsrael's purchaseof French combat aircraft in 1954, "as part of U.S. military assistance to Francefordevelopment of French military industry," and provided a similar subsidy for thepurchase ofFrench Mystère aircraft in 1955. Because France was the ostensible beneficiary ofthesesubsidies, the amounts are not included in most descriptions of U.S. aid to Israel.Mott reportsa total of $94.5 million in military assistance between 1946 and 1955 and anadditional$189.1 million from 1956 to 1965. See William H. Mott IV, United States MilitaryAssistance: An Empirical Perspective (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 176—77.4.See Zach Levey, "Israel's Quest for a Security Guarantee from the United States,1954-1956," British Journal of Middle East Studies 22, no. 1/2 (1995). Leveydescribes DavidBen-Gurion as ambivalent about the virtues of a U.S. guarantee in this period; whilerecognizingthe value of great-power protection, he also worried it might reduce Israel'sautonomy.Levey also notes that some Israeli officials (most notably Moshe Sharett) saw a U.S.guaranteeas a way to restrain the more aggressive policies favored

by Ben-Gurion and others.5.Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale UniversityPress,1975), 191-92, 220.6.Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (New York: Norton, 2001),172-73.7.

Ibid., 178—85; Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-ArabConflict,1881-2001 (New York: Vintage, 2001), 290, 297-300; Brecher, Decisions in Israel'sForeignPolicy, 282-303; Steven L. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America'sMiddleEast Policyfrom Truman to Reagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985),74-82;and David Schoenbaum, The United States and the State of Israel (New York: OxfordUniversityPress, 1993), 115-23.8.According to Warren Bass, "The Kennedy Administration . . . constitutes the pivotalpresidencyin U.S.-Israel relations, the hinge that swung decisively away from the chillyassociationof the 1950s and toward the full-blown alliance we know today." Support Any Friend,3.Abraham Ben-Zvi dates the beginning of the strategic partnership to the late 1950s,andespecially to Israel's acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine (which pledged U.S.supportfor Middle Eastern countries threatened by "international communism") and to itssupportduring various crises in Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan. See Decade of Transition:Eisenhower,

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Kennedy and the Origins of the American-Israeli Alliance (New York: ColumbiaUniversityPress, 1998); and Little, "Making of a Special Relationship."

9. Kennedy was more circumspect in describing the U.S. commitment at a subsequentpressconference. See Bass, Support Any Friend, 3, 183; and Spiegel, Other Arab-IsraeliConflict,106-107.10. Warren Bass correctly notes that the Israel lobby (which he describes as a"Washingtonpowerhouse by the 1980s") was less powerful in the early 1960s and says that "thereis virtuallyno documentary evidence that the Hawk sale was driven by domestic considerations."The absence of documentary evidence is not surprising, however, insofar as presidentsandtheir advisers are unlikely to admit that important strategic choices are beingshaped by domesticconsiderations. Bass also acknowledges that "while Israel's arguments [for the Hawksale] were couched exclusively in strategic terms, the looming midtermelections —howeverhushed—could hardly have been a disincentive," observing further that "Kennedy was apoliticalanimal, and he knew that the Hawk sale could only help with pro-Israel voters anddonors." Bass, Support Any Friend, 145-50. Also see Spiegel, Other Arab-IsraeliConflict,106-10; and Mordechai Gazit, President Kennedy's Policy Toward the Arab States andIsrael(Tel Aviv: Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1983), 30-55.11. An agreement for the sale of A-4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers was also reached at

thistime, althoughthe planes were not delivered until several years later. See Stockholm InternationalPeace Research Institute (SIPRI), The Arms Trade with the Third World (New York:HumanitiesPress, 1971), 532, 535.12. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 6, 13.13. Calculated from USAID, "Greenbook," at http://qesdb.cdie.org/gbk/index.html.14. Ibid.; and The Military Balance 2006 (London: International Institute forStrategic Studies,2006).15. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 2, 10; and Matthew Berger, "GoodNews—and

Bad—for U.S. Aid to Israel," JTA.org, March 28, 2003.16. Edward T. Pound, "A Close Look at U.S. Aid to Israel Reveals Deals That Push CostAbovePublicly Quoted Figures," Wall Street Journal, September 19, 1991.17. According to Clyde Mark of the Congressional Research Service's Foreign Affairs,Defenseand Trade Division, Israel "receives favorable treatment and special benefits underU.S. assistanceprograms that may not be available to other countries." Mark, "Israel: U.S. ForeignAssistance," 8.18. Jeremy M. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel," Report for Congress, CongressionalResearchService, January 5, 2006, 5-6.19. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 8-9.20. "U.S. Assistance to Israel,"http://telaviv.usembassy.gov/publish/mission/amb/assistance.html.21. Duncan L. Clarke, Daniel B. O'Connor, and Jason D. Ellis, Send Guns and Money:SecurityAssistance and U.S. Foreign Policy (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 24; Mark, "Israel:U.S. ForeignAssistance," 10; and Shirl McArthur, "A Conservative Estimate of Total Direct U.S.Aidto Israel: $ 108 Billion," Washington Report on Middle East Affairs (online), July2006, 16-17.22. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel," 11.23. The GAO also discovered that the Department of Defense had waived Israel'sterminationliability requirements (the amounts that buyers must hold in reserve to cover thecosts ofterminating a contract) but believes that "because of the likelihood of continuedIsraeli aid,the waiver represents a minimal risk." U.S. General Accounting Office, "MilitarySales CashFlow Financing," GAO/NSIAD-94-1024, Washington, DC, February 8, 1994, 3.24. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 8.25. The contrast is vividly apparent when one compares the USAID country page forIsrael(www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2007/ane/il.html) with the Web pages for otherimportantU.S. aid recipients.26. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 7.

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27. The CRS also reports that approximately 4 percent of the guaranteed amount is setaside ina treasury account as a reserve against default. For a loan of $ 10 billion, thisappropriationamounts to approximately $400 million. See Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance,"3;Larry Nowels and Clyde Mark, "Israel's Request for U.S. Loan Guarantees," Issue BriefforCongress, Congressional Research Service, October 8, 1991; and Sheldon L. Richman,"TheEconomic Impact of the Israeli Loan Guarantees/'Jowrwa/ of Palestine Studies 21, no.2 (Winter1992).28. According to the CRS's Mark, "It is estimated that Israel receives about $1billion annuallythrough philanthropy, an equal amount through short- and long-term commercial loans,andaround $1 billion in Israel Bonds proceeds." See

Mark, "Israel: U.S. ForeignAssistance,"summary page. State of Israel Bonds are sold in the United States through theDevelopmentCorporation for Israel (DCI). These bonds are nonnegotiable and are seen by thegovernmentof Israel as a "stable source of overseas borrowing as well as an important mechanismformaintaining ties with Diaspora Jewry." Interest rates averaged about 4 percent from1951 to

1989 (which meant a sharp "patriotic discount" as U.S. Treasury rates rose rapidlyafter1980), but "the DCI bond offerings have had to move in recent years towards marketpricing."Sales of Israel bonds reportedly reached $1.2 billion in 2006, and the cumulativetotalof funds raised through these bonds now exceeds $25 billion. See Suhas L. Ketkar,"DiasporaBonds: Track Record and Potential," World Bank Discussion Paper, August 31, 2006; andAviKrawitz, "Israel Bonds Raises $1.2 billion in 2006," Jerusalem Post, December 10,2006.29. Dale Russakoff, "Treasury Finds Bite in Israel Bonds; 1984 Law Places New Tax onArtificiallyLow Interest Rates," Washington Post, September 12, 1985; "Tax Report," Wall StreetJournal, August 20, 1986; and Russell Mokhiber, "Bonds of Affection," MultinationalMonitor(1988), http://multinationalmonitor.org/hyper/issues/1988/04/mm0488_10.html.30. According to the 1RS, to qualify for the deduction, a taxpayer's contribution"must be madeto an organization created and recognized as a charitable organization under the lawsof Israel.The deduction will be allowed in the amount that would be allowed if theorganizationwas created under the laws of the United States, but is limited to 25% of [thetaxpayer's] adjustedgross income from Israeli sources." "Charitable Contributions," Publication 526,U.S. Internal Revenue Service, 3, www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf. Mexico andCanadaappear to be the only other countries with similar provisions.31. The clandestine effort to obtain arms for the Zionist military forces prior toindependence isrecounted in Leonard Slater, The Pledge (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970).32. Shimon Peres, Battling for Peace: A Memoir (New York: Random House, 1995), 119;Michael Karpin, The Bomb in the Basement: How Israel Went Nuclear and What ThatMeansfor the World (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), 135-37; and Avner Cohen, Israel andtheBomb (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 67, 70.

33. Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, "Mission Statement,"www.israelsoldiers.org; andAimee Rhodes, "New York Dinner Raises $18m for IDF," Jerusalem Post, April 3, 2007.34. As a Bank of Jerusalem guide for Israeli charities recently advised, "While lawsgoverningAmerican contributions to foreign charities have always existed, they were vague andconsequently,rarely enforced. Contributions from individuals and American 501c(3) corporationsto Israeli charities were unsupervised and their ultimate use was difficult to traceand determine."The guide warns that this situation has changed significantly since September 11,2001. Bank of Jerusalem, "Help Them Help You: A Recommendation for the IsraeliCharity,"www.bankjerusalem.co.il/indexE.php?page=588 (accessed March 28, 2007).35. Gershom Gorenberg, The Accidental

Empire: Israel and the Birth of theSettlements,1967-1977 (New York: Times Books/Henry Holt, 2006), 218-19. Similarly, the Israelipoliticalscientist David Newman has reportedly described the Jewish Agency and the WZO asoperating"under one umbrella, with the same officials, departments and administratorsoverseeingthe activities." See Amy Teibel and Ramit Plushnick-Masti, "As Israel Leaves Gaza,Billfor Its Settlement Ambitions Is Shrouded in Mystery," Associated Press, August 10,2005.

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36. Nathaniel Popper, "Jewish Officials Profess Shock over Report on Zionist Body,"Forumd,

March 18, 2005; and "Summary of the Opinion Concerning Unauthorized Outposts" (theSasson Report), www.fmep.org/documents/sassonreport.html.37. "U.S. Tax-Exempt Charitable Contributions to Israel: Donations, IllegalSettlements, andTerror Attacks Against the US," Middle East Foreign Policy Research Note, October 5,2005,www.irmep.org/tec.htm.38. International Monetary Fund, "World Economic Outlook Database for September2006,"www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2006/02/data/index.aspx.39. Human Development Report 2006 (New York: United Nations Development Programme,2006), http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics; and Economist Intelligence Unit,"2005Quality of Life Rankings," www.economist.com/media/pdf/QUALITY_OF_LIFE.pdf.40. Mitchell G. Bard and Daniel Pipes, "How Special Is the U.S.-Israel Relationship?"MiddleEast Quarterly 4, no. 2 (June 1997): 43.41. Bishara A. Bahbah, "The United States and Israel's Energy Security," Journal ofPalestineStudies 11, no. 2 (Winter 1982): 118-30. For the text of the original agreement, see"Israel-United States Memorandum of Understanding, September 1, 1975" and "Memorandum ofAgreement between the Governments of the United States of America and Israel—Oil,"www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/mou 1975.html andwww.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/cdoilmou.html. Also see "Oil from Iraq: An Israeli Pipedream/'Jawe'sMiddleEast/Africa Report, April 16, 2003,www.janes.com/regional_news/africa_middle_east/news/fr/fr030416_l_n.shtml.42. William B. Quandt, Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics (Washington, DC:Brookings InstitutionPress, 1986), 313; Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 371-72; Moshe Dayan,Breakthrough: A Personal Account of the Egypt-Israeli Peace Negotiations (New York:Knopf,1981), 274-76; "Israel: Oil Supply Arrangement," Memoranda of Agreement, UnitedStatesTreaties and Other International Acts Series 9533, 30 UST 5994 (Washington, DC,March1979), 5989-96; Judith Miller, "Israel Pressing U.S. on Oil Sales Accord," New YorkTimes,August 17, 1980; and Steven Rattner, "U.S. and Israel Reach Agreement on Oil," NewYorkTimes, October 16, 1980.43. USAID, "Greenbook."44. Alfred Prados, "Jordan: U.S. Relations and Bilateral Issues," Issue Brief forCongress, CongressionalResearch Service, January 9, 2002; and USAID, "Greenbook."45. The 1975 Israel-U.S. Memorandum of Understanding committed Washington to "makeevery effort to be fully responsive .. . to Israel's military equipment and otherdefense requirements"and "to continue to maintain Israel's defensive strength through the supply ofadvanced types of equipment."46. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel," 1.47. David Rogers and Edward T. Pound, "How Israel Spends $1.8

Billion a Year at ItsPurchasingMission in New York," Wall Street Journal, January 20, 1992.48. The Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA) was renamed the Defense SecurityCooperationAgency in 1998.49. According to the GAO, "Whereas other countries primarily use thegovernment-to-governmentprocess, Israel uses commercial contracts for about 99 percent of its purchases .. .By usingthe commercial process, Israel can avoid the Defense Department's 3-percentadministrativecharge for FMS sales." There are also looser governmental oversight and approvalguidelines for commercial sales to Israel. "DSAA is not required to review contractsandpurchase orders from $50,000 to $500,000 until after Israel receives the FMS funds"and

"DSAA does not review contracts and purchase orders below $50,000." Moreover, "theunusualway DSAA administers the Israeli program and staffing limitations complicate fullimplementationof the agreement to report. . . sensitive items." U.S. General AccountingOffice, "Security Assistance: Reporting of Program Content Changes,"GAO/NSIAD-90115,Washington, DC, May 1990, 8-9, 14.50. Quoted in Steven Pearlstein, "U.S. Military Office Defends Israeli Aid; CloserScrutiny of

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Program Described as Unnecessary," Washington Post, July 30, 1992. Also see DavidRogers

and Edward Pound, "The Money Trail: U.S. Firms Are Linked to an Israeli General atthe

Heart of a Scandal," Wall Street Journal, January 20, 1992; Rogers and Pound, "HowIsrael

Spends $1.8 Billion"; Joel Brinkley, "Israeli General Pleads Guilty in Bribery Case,"New

York Times, March 28, 1991; Hillel Kuttler, "U.S. Defense Procurement Faults Led to

Dotan Affair," Jerusalem Post, August 12, 1993; and U.S. General Accounting Office,"For

eign Military Aid to Israel: Diversion of U.S. Funds and Circumvention of U.S.Program Re

strictions," GAO/T-OSI-94-9, Washington, DC, October 1993.

51. As of 2004, expenditures on the Lavi, Merkava, Arrow, and other programs amountedto$2.68 billion. See "U.S. Assistance to Israel."52. Dov S. Zakheim, Flight of the Lavi: Inside a U.S.-Israeli Crisis (Washington, DC:Brassey's,1996). Zakheim was deputy undersecretary of defense in the Reagan administration andanexperienced defense analyst. He was also an Orthodox Jew and a strong supporter ofIsrael,yet his determined efforts to assess the true costs of the Lavi project andeventually to cancelit earned him repeated attacks on his character. Indeed, he reports that Israelidefenseminister Moshe Arens once called him a "traitor to the family." See xv, 256-57. AlsoseeDuncan L. Clarke and Alan S. Cohen, "The United States, Israel and the LaviFighter,"Middle East Journal 40, no. 1 (Winter 1986); and

James P. DeLoughry, "The UnitedStatesand the LAVI," Airpower Journal 4, no. 3 (Fall 1990).53. Mark, "Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance," 8; Carol Migdalovitz, "Israel:Background and Relationswith the United States," Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, August31, 2006, 19; and Duncan L. Clarke, "The Arrow Missile: The United States, Israel,and Strategic Cooperation," Middle East Journal 48, no. 3 (Summer 1994).54. "Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the United States andthe Government of Israel on Strategic Cooperation," November 30, 1981, posted on thewebsite of the Avalon Project at Yale Law School,www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/mideast/pal03.htm.55. Congress established the designation "Major Non-NATO Ally" in 1988, as part ofU.S.Code Title 10 (Armed Forces). See Subtitle A, Part IV, Chapter 138, Subchapter II,Section

2350a. On Israel's designation, see Migdalovitz, "Israel: Background and Relations,"19.56. Yitzhak Benhorin, "US to Double Emergency Equipment Stored in Israel,"Ynetnews.com,December 12, 2006.57. Feldman also notes that it would be difficult and costly for the United States totransportthis matériel from Israel to its most likely area of deployment, the Persian Gulf.See ShaiFeldman, The Future of U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation (Washington, DC: WashingtonInstitutefor Near East Policy, 1996), 45-46. Also see Clarke et al., Send Guns and Money,162-63.58. Benhorin, "US to Double Emergency Equipment."59. These developments are documented in Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict,410-11;Migdalovitz, "Israel: Background and Relations," 18-19; Bard and Pipes, "How SpecialIsthe U.S.-Israel Relationship:1"; Clyde Mark, "Israeli-United States Relations," IssueBrief forCongress, Congressional Research Service, November 9, 2004, 9-10; and Schoenbaum,The United States and the State of Israel, 280-81.60. Jeffrey T Richelson and Desmond Ball, The Ties That Bind: IntelligenceCooperation Betweenthe UKUSA Countries (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 173, 304; Jeffrey T. Richelson,"The Calculus of Intelligence Cooperation," International Journal of Intelligence andCounterintelligence4, no. 3 (Fall 1990): 314; and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, The Israeli Connection:Who Israel Arms and Why (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 40-41.61. Jeffrey T Richelson, The U.S. Intelligence Community, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA:Ballinger,1989), 275-77; and Seymour Hersh, The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal andAmericanForeign Policy (New York: Random House, 1991), 3-8.62. Ephraim Kahana, "Mossad-CIA Cooperation," International Journal of IntelligenceandCounterintelligence 14, no. 3 (July 2001): 416.63. Robert Norris et al., "Israeli Nuclear Forces, 2002," Bulletin of the AtomicScientists 58, no.

5 (September/October 2002): 73-75; and "Israel Profile: Nuclear," Nuclear ThreatInitiative,www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/Israel/Nuclear/index.html.

64. Bass, Support Any Friend, 198, 206.65. Ibid., 216, 219, 222.66. Quoted in Karpin, Bomb in the Basement, 237.67. Cohen, Israel and the Bomb, 193. The White House aide Robert Komer later claimedthatKennedy's decision to provide U.S. arms to Israel in the 1960s was part of adeliberate effortto convince Jerusalem not to go nuclear, but if this was in fact the objective, itclearlyfailed. As Michael Karpin notes, "Israel wanted both the 'product' of Dimona

[i.e.,nuclearweapons] as well as offensive weaponry from the United States. And this, ultimately,is whatit got." Bomb in the Basement, 238.68. Bass, Support Any Friend, 252.69. Hersh, Samson Option, 188—89. Bass describes Johnson's approach to Dimona asbeing"willing to settle for a mutually tolerable level of duplicity." Support Any Friend,252.70. Avner Cohen, "Israel and Chemical/Biological Weapons: History, Deterrence, andArmsControl," Nonproliferation Review 8, no. 3 (Fall-Winter 2001).71. Total Soviet aid to Cuba may have been as large as U.S. aid to Israel in someyears (roughly$3 billion per annum), but these estimates use the official dollar-peso exchange rate

andthus overstate the total amount of Soviet support. Cuba's population is also roughlytwicethat of Israel's, so Soviet aid per capita was substantially smaller than U.S. aid toIsrael, andthe United States has backed Israel for a longer period than Moscow subsidizedHavana.Castro was also a tamer client. As Jorge Dominguez noted, "Cuba does not opposeSoviet interests;it exercises its autonomy mindful of, and consistent with those interests. Atcrucialtimes, as with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Cuba has adopted policies at greatcost toits own interests . . . And even over domestic Soviet policies at odds with Cuba'sown, Cubais circumspect in its criticisms of Moscow. The tight Soviet hegemony thus placesreal andsignificant limits on Cuba's autonomy." To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba'sForeignPolicy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 111 and Appendix B.72. Quandt, Peace Process, 249. Some sources claim that Begin did not in fact breakhis promise,arguing that he had not initiated the discussion of AWACS but had merely expressedstrong opposition to the sale when members of Congress asked him about it. It isclear fromReagan's memoirs that the former president did not find this explanation of Beginsconductconvincing. "I didn't like having representatives of a foreign country—any foreigncountry—trying to interfere in what I regarded as our domestic political process and thesetting of ourforeign policy .. . I felt he'd [Begin] broken his word and I was angry about it."Ronald Reagan,An American Life (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 412, 414-16.73. The English text of Resolution 242 is reprinted in The Arab-Israeli Conflict:Readingsand Documents, ed. John Norton Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977),1083-84. Also see David Pollock, The Politics of Pressure: American Arms and IsraeliPolicySince the Six Day War (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 74.74. Despite the growing level of U.S. aid after 1968, U.S.-Israeli relations werefrequentlystrained by disputes over the level of U.S. military support and Israeli reluctanceto acceptany of the peace proposals offered by the various mediators. U.S. efforts to forceIsraeli concessionsby restricting arms generally failed, however, and concessions were won onlythrough pledges of additional support. See William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions:AmericanPolicy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (Berkeley: University ofCaliforniaPress, 1977), 97-98, 100-102; Pollock, Politics of Pressure, 74-77; Brecher,Decisions in Israel'sForeign Policy, 487-88, 493-96; and Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 190-91.75. Quoted in Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy, 493.76. These amounts are in constant 2005 dollars. USAID, "Greenbook."77. Shlaim, Iron Wall, 603-605.78. Dennis Ross, The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the

Fight for Middle EastPeace (NewYork: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), 478.

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79. Ben-Zvi continues: "Strategic ties between Washington and Jerusalem continued todevelopduring 1996-1999 . . . These included the prepositioning in Israel of weapons andammunitionduring wartime, and the development of anti-missile systems including the Arrow,Nautilus and the Boost Phase Intercept. The two countries met regularly in suchpanels asthe Joint Political Military Planning Group, the Joint Security Assistance Planning

Groupand the Joint Economic Development Group . . . Indeed, the joint American-Israelicommitteefor strategic planning . . . convened as scheduled on February 21, 1999, despiteIsrael'sdecision to suspend the redeployment stipulated in the Wye accords." "The UnitedStates and Israel: The Netanyahu Era," Strategic Assessment (Jaffee Center forStrategicStudies, Tel Aviv University) 2, no. 2 (October 1999).80. On the fate of Ford's reassessment, see Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 267-71 ;Edward Tivnan,The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon &Schuster, 1987), 89; Charles McC. Mathias Jr., "Ethnic Groups and Foreign Policy,"ForeignAffairs 59, no. 5 (Summer 1981): 992-93; and Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict,296.81. Carter later recalled, "I think Begin deliberately sabotaged the whole thing withthe damnsettlements. He knows he lied. He hadn't left Camp David twelve hours before he wasundertremendous [domestic] pressure . . . There was never any equivocation when we leftCamp David about the fact that there would be no settlements during the interimperiod,during which we would be negotiating the final peace agreement. That was absolutelyandtotally understood." Quoted in Kenneth W. Stein, Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger,Carter,Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace (New York: Routledge, 1999), 256.82. Clinton's outburst is quoted in Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, "Camp David: TheTragedy of Errors," New York Review of Books, August 9, 2001, 60.83. William B. Quandt, Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics (Washington, DC:Brookings InstitutionPress, 1986), 103-104.84. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Aid," 4.85. Itamar Rabinovich, The War for Lebanon, 1970-1985, rev. ed. (Ithaca: CornellUniversityPress, 1985), 138-43.86. William B. Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-IsraeliConflict Since1967, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 307-10; and GlennFrankel, Beyond the Promised Land: Jews and Arabs on the Hard Road to a New Israel(NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 301-304.87. The population growth rates for Israel proper in 1991, 1993, and 1994 were 4.9percent,2.5 percent, and 2.7 percent, respectively. "Sources of Population Growth: TotalIsraeliPopulation and Settler Population, 1991-2003," Foundation for Middle East Peace,Washington,DC, www.fmep.org/settlement_info/stats_data/settler_population_growth/sources_population_growth_ 1991 _2003 .html.88. The Soviet Union/Russia used its veto 119 times between 1946 and 1985, but onlyfourtimes since then. The United States did not issue its first veto until 1970 but hadused it 82times as of March 2007. "Changing Patterns in the Use of the Veto in the SecurityCouncil,"Global Policy Forum, www.globalpolicy.org/security/data/vetotab.htm.89. This

position became known as the "Negroponte Doctrine." See Michael J. Jordan,"SymbolicFight for Israel at U.N.," Christian Science Monitor, December 8, 2003.90. The United States voted in favor of Security Council resolutions condemningIsrael's bloodyassault on Qibya in 1953 and its attack on Iraq's Osirak reactor in 1981. It alsovoted in favorof Resolutions 672 and 681 in 1990, which criticized Israel's deportation ofPalestiniansfrom the Occupied Territories. The United States abstained on Resolution 573 in1985,which condemned Israel's bombing of the PLO headquarters in Tunis, and voted in favorof

Resolution 1073 in 1996, which expressed concern over Israel's construction of atunnel inthe vicinity of the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.91. UN voting records obtained from http://unbisnet.un.org:8080. For a list ofGeneralAssembly resolutions concerning Israel, along with partial voting records, see www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/UN/gatoc.html.

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92. Marc Perelman, "International Agency Eyes Israeli Nukes," Forward, September 5,2003.93. Michael B. Oren offers an extensively researched but decidedly pro-Israel accountof thewar in Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East (New York:OxfordUniversity Press, 2002); a convincing corrective is Roland Popp, "StumblingDecidedlyinto the Six Day War," Middle East Journal 60, no. 2 (Spring 2006). For a recent andmorebalanced treatment by another Israeli historian, see Tom Segev, 1967: Israel, theWar, andthe Year That Transformed the Middle East, trans. Jessica Cohen (New York:MetropolitanBooks, 2007).94. Wheeler is quoted in Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 141; Johnson's remarkto Eban isfrom Popp, "Stumbling Decidedly into the Six Day War," 304. Popp also notes that"almost noone inside the U.S. administration was in any doubt that the Israeli warnings [of animpendingArab attack] were without foundation" (302), and William Quandt reports that the CIAand Pentagon told Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban they "were convinced that Israelwouldeasily win if hostilities were to begin, no matter who struck first." Decade ofDecisions, 50.95. The Israeli government sent telegrams to Foreign Minister Eban and AmbassadorAvrahamHarman in Washington on May 25, claiming an Arab attack was imminent and asking themto seek an immediate American commitment to treat an attack on Israel as akin to anattackon the United States. But as Tom Segev points out, "The Israeli intelligenceassessment ofthe same evening was fairly different from what had been wired to Washington . . .[PrimeMinister] Eshkol was obviously trying to mislead Eban, and through him PresidentJohnson,in order to ensure U.S. support. On a copy of the telegram to Harman, Eshkol added inhisown handwriting: 'All to create an alibi.'" 1967, 256-57.96. Meeting with Eban on the evening of May 26, Johnson gave him an aide-mémoirethatended, "I must emphasize the necessity for Israel not to make itself responsible forthe initiationof hostilities. Israel will not be alone unless it decides to do it alone. We cannotimagineIsrael will make this decision." Quoted in Brecher, Decisions in Israel's ForeignPolicy,393. Johnson repeated a similar warning in a letter to Eshkol on May 28.97. In the words of

William Quandt, Johnson "had no reason to be surprised when hewas awakenedon the morning of June 5 with the news that war had begun. After all, he had takensteps to assure the Israelis that the 'red light' of May 26 had turned yellow . . .The 'yellowlight'hinted at in his letter to [Israeli Prime Minister Levi] Eshkol on June 3, andreiteratedin remarks from [Abe] Fortas and [Arthur] Goldberg, meant 'be careful,' and 'don'tcount onthe United States if you get into trouble.' But, as for most motorists, the yellowlight was tantamountto a green one." Quandt also notes that "Johnson had not quite given the Israelis

a green light, but he had removed a veto on their actions." Peace Process, 38, 41-42;andCheryl Rubenberg, Israel and the American National Interest: A Critical Examination(Urbana:University of Illinois Press, 1986), 120.98. In a review of Oren's Six Days of War, Quandt notes that "Johnson [told] theIsraelis not toact alone, and for a while he really seemed to mean it. By the end of May, he hadapparentlychanged his mind. The Israelis were quick to sense the change, and it mattered tothem asthey decided on war. But we still do not know why Johnson initially was so hesitant,thenwhy he took a tough line with Israel, or why he subsequently changed his mind." "BookReview:Six Days of War," Journal of Cold War Studies 6, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 147. On theother pressures exerted on Johnson, including the letter-writing campaign, see Segev,1967,253-54, 264-65, 304.99. Quandt, Peace Process, 43-44.100. On June 8, 1967, while the Six-Day War was under way, Israeli aircraft andtorpedo boatsattacked the U.S. Navy intelligence ship USS Liberty, which was in internationalwaters offthe Sinai Peninsula. The attack killed thirty-four U.S. sailors and caused extensivedamageto the ship. Israel has long claimed that the attack was an accident based onmistaken identification,and it apologized to the United States and paid some $13 million in compensation.Survivors of the attack, other U.S. naval officers, and a number of U.S. officials(including CIA Director Richard Helms and Secretary of State Dean Rusk) believed theat

NOTES TO PAGES 43-45 369tack was deliberate, and proponents of this view also claim that the subsequentinvestigationswere cursory and incomplete. Other commentators defend Israel's version of theincidentand regard it as a regrettable mishap. For different accounts, see James Bamford,Bodyof Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra Secret National Security Agency (New York: RandomHouse,2002); A. Jay Cristol, The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Attack on the U.S. Navy SpyShip(Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2002); James M. Ennes Jr., Assault on the Liberty:TheTrue Story of an Israeli Attack on an American Intelligence Ship (Gaithersburg, MD:ReintreePress, 2003); Oren, Six Days of War, 263-71 ; and Segev, 1967, 386.101. The diplomacy of the War of Attrition is summarized in Lawrence Whetten, TheCanal War:Four-Power Conflict in the Middle East (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974). UsefulIsraeliperspectives include Ya'acov Bar-Siman-Tov, The Israeli-Egyptian War of Attrition,1969—1970(New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); and Jonathan Shimshoni, Israel andConventionalDeterrence: Border Warfare from 1953 to 1970 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press,1988), chap. 4.102. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 147. Also see Pollock, Politics of Pressure,112-14, 124,126-27; and Brecher, Decisions in Israel's

Foreign Policy, 510.103. Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), 468.104. By helping Israel gain the upper hand on the battlefield, Nixon and Kissingersought to convinceEgypt and Syria to accept a cease-fire and to recognize the limits of Sovietsupport.See Quandt, Peace Process, 113-15, 118.105. Stein, Heroic Diplomacy, 78-79 .106. Ibid., 86, 90; William Burr, ed., The October War and U.S. Policy (Washington,DC: National

Security Archive, October 7, 2003); and Quandt, Peace Process, 118.107. "Kissinger Gave Green Light for Israeli Offensive Violating 1973 Cease-Fire,"National SecurityArchive press release, October 7, 2003; and Quandt, Peace Process, 120, 461nn62,63. Kenneth Stein reports that "Kissinger told Israeli leaders that if it was theirintention tostarve out the Egyptian Third Army, the United States would 'disassociate itself fromit.' ButKissinger did not tell the Israelis not to better their military field advantage.Dayan wantedanother seventy-two hours, and Kissinger acquiesced." Stein also notes, "Withimpunity andKissinger's sanction, of which Sadat was not aware, Israel violated the cease-fireresolution."Heroic Diplomacy, 92.108. "U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding, September 1, 1975." The congressionallegislation(Section 535, PL. 98-473, October 12, 1984) added the stipulation that the PLO"renounceterrorism." See Clyde Mark, "Palestinians and Middle East Peace: Issues for theUnited States," Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, October 24,2002, 2.109. Shlaim, Iron Wall, 337-40 . As Steven Spiegel notes, "Here too the United Statespromiseda unified strategy with Israel, thereby restricting America's ability to speakindependentlywith the PLO." Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 302. On the congressional action in 1984,seeClyde Mark, "Israeli-United States Relations," Issue Brief for Congress,Congressional ResearchService, April 28, 2005, 9.110. The pretext for war was the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador inLondon.This act fell well short of Haig's criterion, insofar as it had nothing to do withthe situationalong the Israeli-Lebanese border and was not ordered by Yasser Arafat or Fatah butby a dissidentPalestinian group led by Abu Nidal. As Shlomo Ben-Ami observes, Haig "should haveknown that Israeli politicians are not especially sensitive to nuances andunderstatementswhen he used unnecessarily ambiguous language in his conversation with Sharon." SeeBen-Ami, Scars of War, 179; Quandt, Peace Process, 250-51 ; Ze'ev Schiff, "The GreenLight," Foreign Policy 50 (Spring 1983); Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, Israel'sLebanon War,trans. Ina Friedman (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 71-73 ; Avner Yaniv,Dilemmasof Security: Politics, Strategy, and the Israeli Experience in Lebanon (New York:Oxford UniversityPress, 1987), 102-103, 105; and James McCartney, "Officials Say Haig Let IsraelThink U.S. Condoned Invasion of Lebanon," Philadelphia Inquirer (online), January23,1983.

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111. Shlaim, The Iron Wall, 416.112. By the time the cease-fire went into effect, notes the Israeli historian ItamarRabinovich,"The IDF had succeeded both in defeating the Syrian army in Lebanon and

limiting thescope of the encounter . . . Equally significant, Syria by seeking an early ceasefireleft Israelfree to focus on Beirut. In the days following the ceasefire, Israeli forcescontinued their advancetoward southern and eastern Beirut and established a territorial link with theforcesof the Lebanese Front." War for Lebanon, 138.113. Rabinovich continues: "Yet it became increasingly difficult to maintain thatpolicy againstaccumulating criticism, particularly in the murky situation in Beirut in the latterpart of

June. These difficulties . . . induced the administration to distance itselfdemonstrably fromIsrael, but did not change the essence of its policy." Ibid., 146.114. George P. Shultz, Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State (New York:Scribner,1993), 112.115. Quandt, Peace Process, 258-59.116. Quoted in Edward R. F. Sheehan, The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger: A SecretHistory of AmericanDiplomacy in the Middle East (Pleasantville, NY: Reader's Digest Press, 1976), 199.117. In his account of the peace process, the U.S. negotiator Dennis Ross offersnumerous examplesof the Clinton administration accommodating Prime Minister Ehud Barak's preferrednegotiating tactics, particularly regarding the unsuccessful effort to reach a peacetreaty with Syria. See Ross, Missing Peace, 530-32, 539, 550-51, 578-80. And as AghaandMalley note in their discussion of Camp David, "In the end, though, and on almost allthesequestionable tactical judgments, the US either gave up or gave in, reluctantlyacquiescingin the way Barak did things out of respect for the things he was trying to do." "CampDavid:The Tragedy of Errors," 60.118. Ron Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?" Survival 43, no. 3 (Autumn2001):40-41.119. Agha and Malley, "Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors," 62-63.120. "Lessons of Arab-Israeli Negotiating: Four Negotiators Look Back and Ahead,"transcript ofpanel discussion, Middle East Institute, April 25, 2005; Nathan Guttman, "U.S.Accused ofPro-Israel Bias at 2000 Camp David," Haaretz, April 29, 2005; and Aaron D. Miller,"Israel'sLawyer," Washington Post, May 23, 2005.121. "A History of Foreign Leaders and Dignitaries Who Have Addressed the U.S.Congress,"http://clerk.house.gov/art_history/art_artifacts/foreignleaders.html. The firstIsraeli leaderto address a joint session of Congress was Yitzhak Rabin in 1976; other states whoseleadershave addressed multiple sessions of Congress in the same period include India(four),Ireland (three), Italy (three), and South Korea (three). If one begins counting in1948 (theyear Israel was founded), Israel is tied at six with France and Italy.122. Bard and Pipes, "How Special Is the U.S.-Israel Relationship?" 41.123. The question asked, "What's your opinion of U.S. policies in the MiddleEast—would yousay they are fair, or do they favor Israel too much, or do they favor thePalestinians toomuch?" See Pew Global Attitudes Project, Views of a Changing World 2003 (Washington,DC: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2003), 5; and Pew GlobalAttitudesProject, "Wave 2 Update Survey; 21 Publics Surveyed, Final Topline (2003)," T-151,http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/185topline.pdf.2: ISRAEL: STRATEGIC ASSET OR LIABILITY?1. A.F.K. Organski, The $36 Billion Bargain: Strategy and Politics in U.S. Assistanceto Israel(New York: Columbia University

Press, 1990); Steven L. Spiegel, "Israel as aStrategic Asset,"Commentary, June 1983; Steven L. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: MakingAmerica's Middle East Policy from Truman to Reagan (Chicago: University of ChicagoPress,1985); and Steven L. Spiegel, "U.S.-Israel Relations after the Gulf War," JerusalemLetter! Viewpoints 117, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, July 15, 1991. Also see StevenRosen,

"The Strategic Value of Israel," AIPAC Papers on U.S.-Israel Relations (Washington,DC:American Israel Public Affairs Committee, 1982).

2. Quoted in Ben Bradlee Jr., "Israel's Lobby," Boston Globe, April 29, 1984.3. Seehttp://aipac.Org/Publications/ AIPACAnalysesIssueBriefsAThe_U.S.-Israel_Strategic_Part

nership.pdf; and http://aipac.org/Publications/ AIPACAnalysesIssueBriefs/The_U.S.Israe1_Relationship.pdf.4. Project for the New American Century, "Letter to President Bush on the War onTerrorism,"September 20, 2001, www.newamericancentury.org/ Bushletter.htm; and "MissionStatement,"Jewish Institute for National Secuity Affairs,www.jinsa.org/about/agenda/agenda.html.5. Martin Kramer, "The American Interest," Azure 5767, no. 26 (Fall 2006): 24-25.6. Efraim Inbar, "Still a Strategic Asset for the US," Jerusalem Post, October 8,2006.7. Not surprisingly, scholars like Spiegel, Organski, and Kramer downplay or dismissthe impactof domestic politics or lobbying groups on U.S. support for Israel. Organski claimsthat"U.S. policy decisions with respect to Israel have, in the main, been made bypresidents andforeign policy elites both by themselves and for reasons entirely their own." Kramersuggeststhat "if the institutions of the [Israel] lobby were to disappear tomorrow, it isquite likely thatAmerican and other Western support would continue unabated." Spiegel describes thebeliefthat the pro-Israel lobby has "great leverage" as a "myth." Despite theseassertions,Spiegel's study contains numerous examples of the lobby shaping the perceptions andbehaviorof key decision makers. Kramer's own career suggests that he does not believe hisown argument, as he has devoted considerable time and effort to defending U.S.support forIsrael and attacking those who question it. See Organski, $36 Billion Bargain, 27;Spiegel,Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 386, 388; and Kramer, "American Interest," 31.8. Scholars have analyzed Truman's decisions extensively, reaching varied conclusionsaboutthe importance of domestic politics and his sensitivities to Jewish opinion. It wasclearly notthe only factor that influenced his conduct as he sought to navigate the complexsituationin Palestine, but virtually all accounts agree that the political preferences ofAmerican Jewry(magnified by the upcoming 1948 election) played a nontrivial role in hiscalculations. SeeSpiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 47-48 ; Kenneth Ray Bain, The March to Zion:UnitedStates Policy and the Founding of Israel (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1979),195-97,202; Zvi Ganin, Truman, American Jewry, and Israel, 1945-1948 (New York: Holmes &Meier, 1979); and Michael B. Oren, Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the

MiddleEast1776 to the Present (New York: Norton, 2007), 484, 488-89, 499.9. Quoted in Jerome Slater, "Ideology vs. the National Interest: Bush, Sharon, andU.S. Policyin the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," Security Studies 12, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 167.10. Warren Bass, Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of theU.S.-IsraelAlliance (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 148-49; and David Schoenbaum,TheUnited States and the State of Israel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993),136-37.11. The Nixon/Kissinger strategy is summarized in William B. Quandt, Peace Process:American

Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict in 1967, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: BrookingsInstitutionPress, 2005), 69-70, 92-94; Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston: Little,Brown, 1979), 1279, 1289-91, chap. 10; and Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval(Boston:Little, Brown, 1982), 195-205.12. Israel allowed Western aircraft to overfly Israeli territory during the 1958Jordan crisis, andagreed to a U.S. request to intervene in support of King Hussein following Syrianinterventionin the 1970 clash between Hussein and the PLO. In the end, Jordanian air unitsattackedthe Syrians on their own and the Syrians withdrew without Israel having to respond.U.S. officials were grateful for Israeli support in both cases, but as Alan Dowtynotes, Israel'scontribution to resolving the 1970 crisis was "secondary at best." Nigel Ashton alsosuggeststhat Hussein regarded Israel as a potential threat during the crisis and that U.S.officialsmistakenly "credited Israel with helping the United States to win a cold war victoryin whatwas, in reality, an inter-Arab struggle." Alan Dowty, Middle East Crisis:Decisionmaking in1958, 1970, and 1973 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 177; Nigel J.Ash

ton, "Pulling the Strings: King Hussein's Role During the Crisis of 1970 in Jordan,"InternationalHistory Review 28, no. 1 (March 2006): 109; and Quandt, Peace Process, 79-83.

13. Dan Raviv and Yossi Melman, Friends in Deed: Inside the U.S.-IsraelAlliance (NewYork: Hyperion,1994), 66-68, 114-15.14. For a sympathetic but skeptical analysis of the "strategic asset" argument by thelongtimehead of the Military Assistance Branch of the Office of Management and Budget, seeHarryShaw, "Strategic Dissensus," Foreign Policy 61 (Winter 1985-86).15. Reportedly a response to the killing of an Israel bicyclist by infiltrators fromEgypt, the Gazaraid has also been interpreted as Ben-Gurion's way of boosting Israeli morale,dramatizinghis return to power, and reducing Nasser's growing prestige. But as Shlomo Ben-Amiobserves,"Rather than cutting short Egypt's commitment to a war strategy, [the Gazaoperation]enhanced it." Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy (New York:Oxford University Press, 2006), 77; Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the ArabWorld(New York: Norton, 2001), 123-29; Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's ForeignPolicy(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 254-55, esp. note 1; and E.L.M. Burns,BetweenArab and Israeli (New York: Ivan Obolensky, 1963), 20. Syria had similar motives forseekingSoviet arms during this period,

and its desire for aid was intensified by anespeciallystrong Israeli raid in December 1955. Stephen M. Walt, The Origins of Alliances(Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 1987), 62, esp. note 36.16. On the Soviet Union's turbulent relationship with its Arab allies, see MohamedHeikal, TheSphinx and the Commissar: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Influence in the Middle East(NewYork: Harper, 1976); Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-EgyptianInfluenceRelationship Since the June War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); andYa'acov Roi, éd., From Encroachment to Involvement: A Documentary Study of SovietForeign

Policy in the Middle East, 1945-1973 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1974).17. For a persuasive argument to this effect, see Jerome Slater, "The Superpowers andan Arab-Israeli Political Settlement: The Cold War Years," Political Science Quarterly 105,no. 4(Winter 1990-91).18. "Kissinger Memorandum: 'To Isolate the Palestinians,'" MERIP Reports no. 96 (May1981):24. This article is a memorandum of a June 1975 conversation between Kissinger andtheso-called Klutznick Group, a gathering of Jewish-American leaders organized byPhilipKlutznick, a former president of B'nai B'rith International and former U.S. secretaryof commerce.Also see Quandt, Peace Process, 103-104.19. Ussama Makdisi, "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World: An Interpretation of aBrief History,"Journal of American History 89, no. 2 (September 2002): 538-39. Alfred Prados of theCongressional Research Service agrees, noting, "The United States, a latecomer to theMiddleEast, enjoyed a more favorable image in the region than did its Europeancounterpartsin the 19th and early 20th centuries." "Middle East: Attitudes Toward the UnitedStates,"Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, December 31, 2001, 2.20. Shibley Telhami, The Stakes: America and the Middle East (Boulder, CO: Westview,2002),50-59; and Makdisi, "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World," 548-50.21. Shaw, "Strategic Dissensus," 137.22. Moshe Dayan: Story of My Life (New York: William Morrow, 1976), 512-13.23. The total cost inflicted by the "oil weapon" was almost certainly larger, as ithad long-termeffects on inflation, real income, and productivity growth, as well as indirecteffects on investment,currency price volatility, and other factors, but there is considerable disagreementamong economists regarding the magnitude of these effects. On petroleum imports, seeDominick Salvatore, "Petroleum Prices and Economic Performance in the G-7 Countries,"inSiamack Shojai and Bernard S. Katz, eds., The Oil Market in the 1980s: A Decade ofDecline(New York: Praeger, 1992), 94; and Mancur Olson, "The Productivity Slowdown, the OilShocks and the Real Cycle," Journal of Economic Perspectives 2, no. 4 (Fall 1988):43-69.The cost to OECD countries was to push their net oil import bill from $35 billion in1973to more than $100 billion in 1974. See Robert J. Lieber, The Oil Decade: Conflict andCo

operation in the West (New York: Praeger, 1983), 21. The GDP estimate is that of theFederalEnergy Administration and of many economists. See Edward N. Krapels, Oil CrisisManagement: Strategic Stockpiling for International Security (Baltimore: JohnsHopkinsUniversity Press, 1980), 34; and Fiona Venn, The Oil

Crisis (London: Longman, 2002),154-55. The calculation for 2000 dollars uses data from Louis D. Johnston and SamuelH.Williamson, "The Annual Real and Nominal GDP for the United States, 1790-Present,"Economic History Services, October 2005.

24. Quoted in Jeffrey Richelson, The U.S. Intelligence Community, 2nd ed. (Cambridge,MA:Ballinger, 1989), 277.25. Quoted in Roland Popp, "Stumbling Decidedly into the Six Day War," Middle EastJournal60, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 300. Tom Segev has confirmed that Rostow's appraisal wasessentiallycorrect. See his 1967: Israel, the War and the Year That Transformed the MiddleEast,trans. Jessica Cohen (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 256-58.

26. Shlomo Brom, "The War in Iraq: An Intelligence Failure," Strategic Assessment(Jaffee Centerfor Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University) 6, no. 3 (November 2003); "Selectionsfromthe Media, 1998-2003," ibid., 17-19; Gideon Alon, "Report Slams Assessment ofDangersPosed by Libya, Iraq," Haaretz, March 28, 2004; Dan Baron, "Israeli Report BlastsIntelligencefor Exaggerating the Iraqi Threat," JTA.org, March 28, 2004; Greg Myre, "LawmakersRebuke Israeli Intelligence Services over Iraq," New York Times, March 29, 2004; andJames Risen, State of War: The Secret History of the CIA and the Bush Administration(NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 72-73.27. Kramer, "American Interest," 24-25.28. Shaw also notes that "all Israelis are acutely aware of the burden for a countryof only 4 millionpeople of lives lost in even short, successful wars. Israel simply lacks thepersonnel tosacrifice on costly military adventures beyond its immediate neighborhood.""Strategic Dissensus,"130.29. Quoted in Duncan L. Clarke, Daniel B. O'Connor, and Jason D. Ellis, Send GunsandMoney: Security Assistance and U.S. Foreign Policy (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997),173. AnotherDOD official noted that Israel's "proximity to the Gulf is not enough to be of realuseas a base for fighting there, except on paper. We need to get much closer in theevent of anyactual military contingency, and that's why we're going for forward basing in Oman."Israel'scontribution would be limited to maintenance and possibly hospital facilities. SeeJoe Stork,"Israel as a Strategic Asset," in MERIP Reports no. 105, Reagan Targets the MiddleEast(May 1982), 12.30. Shaw, "Strategic Dissensus," 133.31. See the discussion of Operation Earnest Will atwww.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/earnest_will.htm; and Dilip Hiro, The Longest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict(NewYork: Routledge, 1991), 129-32, 166, 186-91, 202-204.32. "Kissinger Memorandum," 25.33. During the 1980 campaign, Reagan told the American Jewish Press Association that"Israelis a strategic asset for the U.S., [and] I believe we must have policies which giveconcreteexpression to that position." See Stork, "Israel as a Strategic Asset," 3; and RonaldReagan,An American Life (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 410.34. With respect to the latter element, Feldman says "the clearest manifestation ofthis phenomenonis the unique role of the influential American Israel Public Affairs Committee(AIPAC)." See his The Future of U.S.-Israel Strategic Cooperation (Washington, DC:WashingtonInstitute for Near East Policy, 1996), 5-6.35. Bernard Lewis, "Rethinking the Middle East," Foreign Affairs 71, no. 4 (Fall1992): 110-11;Bernard Reich, Securing the Covenant: United States—Israeli Relations After the ColdWar(Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), 123; and Robert J. Art, A

Grand Strategy for America(Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 2003), 137.36. Waldegrave is quoted in David Kimche, The Last Option: After Nasser, Arafat, andSaddamHussein, the Quest for Peace in the Middle East (New York: Scribner, 1991), 236;Lewis, "Re

thinking the Middle East," 110-11. History repeated itself during the second Gulf War

in2003. The United States needed to assemble a large coalition in order to make itspreventivewar look legitimate, and it therefore worked overtime to persuade an array ofcountriesto contribute troops to the "coalition of the willing." But Israel was absent fromthis list,even though its leaders and people strongly supported the war. We address this issueatgreater length in Chapter 8.

37. Based on data from the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorismdatabase,www.tkb.org.38. Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon have shown that some members of the Clintonadministrationplaced a high priority on counterterrorism, but they also document how difficult itwas to implement that priority during the 1990s. In their words, "The work wasdifficult becausea government that had never viewed terrorism as a first-tier threat had neither theorganization nor the laws to deal with it that way. In many agencies offices handlingcounterterrorismissues were bureaucratic backwaters, their managers carrying none of the heftof colleagues who deal with geographic regions or high-profile issues such as armscontrol."It is also instructive that the Bush administration did not place a high priority onterrorismupon taking office. See Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, The Age of Sacred Terror(NewYork: Random House, 2002), 221, 327-29; and Richard A. Clarke, Against All Enemies:InsideAmerica's War on Terror (New York: Free Press, 2004), 227-36.39. Put differently, the U.S. defense budget was over half the size of the entirecombinedeconomies of these four states (measured on a purchasing parity basis). Figures fromTheMilitary Balance 2000-2001 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies,2001);and Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook 2000 (online).40. For an excellent analysis of U.S. policy toward Iraq and Iran, and toward roguestates moregenerally, see Robert Litwak, Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment afterthe ColdWar (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000). Although theRepublicancontrolledCongress generally favored more aggressive policies toward Iran and Iraq andoccasionally voted to support stiffer sanctions and various antiregime exiles, theClintonadministration never undertook a serious effort at regime change.41. Bruce W. Jentleson and Christopher A. Whytock, "Who 'Won' Libya? TheForce-DiplomacyDebate and Its Implications for Theory and Policy," International Security 30, no. 3(Winter2005-2006); Ronald Bruce St. John, "Libya Is Not Iraq: Preemptive Strikes, WMD, andDiplomacy," Middle East Journal 58, no. 3 (Summer 2004); and Flynt Leverett, "WhyLibyaGave Up on the Bomb," New York Times, January 23, 2004.42. Litwak, Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy, 168-69.43. Sharon is quoted in William Safire, "Israel or Arafat," New York Times,

December3, 2001;the unnamed official is quoted in Robert G. Kaiser, "Bush and Sharon Nearly IdenticalonMideast Policy," Washington Post, February 9, 2003. Also see Nathan Guttman, "AMarriageCemented by Terror," Salon.com, January 24, 2006.44. "Netanyahu Speech Before the U.S. Senate," April 10, 2002, www.netanyahu.org/ netspeacinse.html; and Benjamin Netanyahu, "Three Principles Key to Defeat ofTerrorism,"Chicago Sun-Times, January 7, 2002.45. Ehud Barak, "Democratic Unity Is the Only Answer to Terrorism," Times (London),September

13, 2001.46. "Entire Text of Olmert Speech to Congress," Jerusalem Post, May 24, 2006.47. Robert Satloff, "Israel's Not the Issue, Pass It On," Los Angeles Times, October10, 2001.48. "Peace Can Only Come Once the US Gives Israel the Green Light to Eliminate Hamasandthe Hezbollah," press release, Office of Charles Schumer, U.S. Senate, December 3,2001,www.senate.gov/~schumer/l-Senator%20Schumer%20Website%20Files/pressroom/press_releases/PR00766.html.49. HR Res. 392 (May 2, 2002); and S Res. 247 (April 22, 2002).50. According to one account, "Even as speakers singled out [Yasser] Arafat as aproblem requiringimmediate action, they also portrayed him as but one partner in a much wider'coalition

of forces' that included Iran, Iraq, and Syria . . . With regard to neutralizingthese threats,regime change was the preferred option." See Dana Hearn, "AIPAC Policy Conference,21-23 April 2002," Journal of Palestine Studies 31, no. 4 (Summer 2002): 67-68.

51. "Letter to President Bush on Israel, Arafat, and the War on Terrorism," Projectfor the NewAmerican Century, April 3, 2002, www.newamericancentury.org/Bushletter-040302.htm.The principal author of the open letter, William Kristol, offered the same viewduring Israel's2006 war in Lebanon, writing that "while Syria and Iran are enemies of Israel, theyarealso enemies of the United States" and concluding, "This is our war, too." WilliamKristol,"It's Our War," Weekly Standard, July 24, 2006.52. Maoz and Seale are quoted in Susan Taylor Martin, "Experts Disagree on Dangers ofSyria,"St. Petersburg Times (online), November 3, 2002. Also see Benjamin and Simon, Age ofSacredTerror, 194.53. See, among many other studies, Tanya Reinhart, Israel/Palestine: How to End theWar of1948, expanded 2nd ed. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005); and Tanya Reinhart,TheRoad Map to Nowhere: Israel/Palestine Since 2003 (London: Verso, 2006).54. As Robert Pape has convincingly shown, suicide terrorism is a tactic that adiverse array ofpolitical movements have adopted, usually when they were weak and trying to defeat ademocraticadversary engaged in what the terrorists regard as illegitimate occupation. SeeRobert A. Pape, Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism (New York:RandomHouse, 2005).55. Satloff, "Israel's Not the Issue"; Kramer, "American Interest," 29; NormanPodhoretz, "IsraelIsn't the Issue," Wall Street Journal, September 20, 2001; Norman Podhoretz, "WorldWar IV:How It Started, What It Means, and Why We Have to Win," Commentary, September 2004;Andrea Levin, "Don't Scapegoat Israel," Boston Globe,

October 6, 2001; and DennisRoss,"Bin Laden's Terrorism Isn't About the Palestinians," New York Times, October 12,2001.Others making this point in response to our original article include Alan Dershowitz,"Debunkingthe Newest—and Oldest—Jewish Conspiracy: A Reply to the Mearsheimer-Walt'Working Paper,'" John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research WorkingPaper,Harvard University, April 2006, 29; Marc Landy, "Zealous Realism: Comments onMearsheimer and Walt," Forum (Berkeley Electronic Press) 4, issue 1, article 6(2006); andSteven Simon, "Here's Where 'The Israel Lobby' Is Wrong," Daily Star, May 4, 2006.56. Abdel Mahdi Abdallah, "Causes of Anti-Americanism in the Arab World: ASocio-Political

Perspective," Middle East Review of International Affairs 7, no. 4 (December 2003).57. Qutb formed his impressions of America during a visit here in 1948 and was laterexecutedby the Egyptian government in 1966. See Yvonne Y. Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue ofIslamicRevival," in Voices of Resurgent Islam, ed. John Esposito (New York: OxfordUniversityPress, 1983), 67-98.58. Quoted in Makdisi, "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World," 555.59. Steve Coll, Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and BinLaden, from theSoviet Invasion to September 10, 2001 (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 250—51, 273;and"Transcript: The Yasin Interview," 60 Minutes, June 2, 2002,www.cbsnews.com/ stories/2002/06/02/60minutes/printable510847.shtml.60. Anonymous [Michael Scheuer], Through Our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, RadicalIslam,and the Future of America (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002), 87.61. Quoted in Lawrence Wright, The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11 (NewYork:Knopf, 2006), 75-76.62. Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden, ed. Bruce Lawrence(London:Verso, 2005), 4.63. Benjamin and Simon, Age of Sacred Terror, 140—41.64. Osama bin Laden, "From Somalia to Afghanistan" (March 1997), in Lawrence,Messages tothe World, 46. For additional pre-9/11 condemnations of the United States for itssupport ofIsrael, and for accusations that the United States was colluding with Israel, see thefollowingselections from the same volume: "Declaration of Jihad" (August 23, 1996), 30; "The

World Islamic Front" (February 23, 1998), 60-61; and "A Muslim Bomb" (December1998), 66-70. Also see "Jihad against Jews and Crusaders" and "New Osama bin LadenVideo Contains Anti-Israel and Anti-American Statements," on the Anti-DefamationLeague website, www.adl.org/terrorism_america/bin_l_print.asp.

65. Max Rodenbeck, "Their Master's Voice," New York Review of Books, March 9, 2006,8. Thebooks under review were Peter L. Bergen, The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral Historyofal Qaeda's Leader (New York: Free Press, 2006), and Lawrence, Messages to the World.66. "Outline of the 9/11 Plot," Staff Statement no. 16, National Commission onTerrorist AttacksUpon the United States, June 16, 2004, 18. Also see Nathan Guttman, "Al-QaidaPlanned Attacks during PM's Visit to White House," Haaretz, June 17, 2004; and MarcPerelman, "Bin Laden Aimed to Link Plot to Israel," Forward, June 25, 2004.67. "Outline of the 9/11 Plot," 18.68. Ibid., 4.69. The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on

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Investigations, Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives(Washington,DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, October 1993), 22. Also see Edward T. Pound,

"Israel Is Impeding U.S. Dotan Probe, Documents Show," Wall Street Journal, July 29,1992; and Edward T. Pound, "U.S. Says Israel Withheld Help in Dotan Probe," WallStreetJournal, July 25, 1992.

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4. The principal myths are laid out and refuted in Simha Flapan, The Birth of Israel:Myths andRealities (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).5. For a brief but excellent summary of the "new history" see Avi Shlaim, "The NewHistory of1948 and the Palestinian Nakba," Miftah.org, March 18, 2004.6. Meron Rappaport, "IDF Commander: We Fired More Than a Million Cluster Bombs in

Lebanon," Haaretz, September 12, 2006; and "Shooting Without a Target," Haaretzeditorial,September 14, 2006.

7. Benny Morris, 1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians (New York: OxfordUniversityPress, 2003), 13. Also see Flapan, Birth of Israel, 187-99.8. Morris, 1948 and After, 14. Morris sharply criticized our original article, "TheIsrael Lobby,"in a lengthy essay ("And Now for Some Facts: The Ignorance at the Heart of anInnuendo,"New Republic, May 8, 2006), alleging that we had made numerous historical errors. Inparticular,he challenged our interpretation of the military balance in the 1948 War ofIndependence,as well as our interpretation of several other key episodes of Zionist and Israelihistory. Morris's critique required him to contradict his own very important earlyscholarship(and the work of other respected historians) that has done so much to illuminateIsrael'sfounding and relationship with its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians. We believethisscholarship backs up our account of Israel's military superiority and territorialambitions, aswell as its policies on refugees. We have addressed Morris's charges in John J.Mearsheimerand Stephen M. Walt, "Setting the Record Straight: A Response to Critics of 'TheIsraelLobby,'" December 12, 2006, 26-46, available atwww.israellobbybook.com.9. On the military balance in the 1948 war, see Trevor N. Dupuy, Elusive Victory: TheArab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974 (New York: Harper, 1978), 3-19, 121-25; Rashid Khalidi, "ThePalestinians and 1948: The Underlying Causes of Failure," in The War for Palestine:Rewritingthe History of 1948, ed. Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim (New York: CambridgeUniversityPress, 2001), 12-36; Rashid Khalidi, The Iron Cage: The Story of the PalestinianStrugglefor Statehood (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), chap. 4; Haim Levenberg, MilitaryPreparationsof the Arab Community in Palestine, 1945-1948 (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1993);BennyMorris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited (New York: CambridgeUniversityPress, 2004), chaps. 1, 3; Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999 (New York: Knopf, 1999), 187-89, 191-96, 215-23, 235-36,241-42;

Morris, 1948 and After, 13-16; and Martin Van Creveld, The Sword and theOlive:A Critical History of the Israeli Defense Forces (New York: Public Affairs, 1998),77-82.10. Ilan Pappe, The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine (Oxford: Oneworld Publications,2006), 45.11. Quoted in ibid., 22. For evidence that the Zionists understood that theirfighting forces hada decisive advantage over the Palestinians and that this situation allowed them topursue aggressivepolicies against the Palestinians, see ibid., esp. 22—23, 26, 41, 44—46, 70, 79, 84.12. Morris, 1948 and After, 15.13. Ibid.14. Morris, Righteous Victims, 393.15. On the military balances in the 1956, 1967, and 1973 wars, see Dupuy, Elusive

Victory,146-47, 212-14, 231-44, 333-40, 388-90, 597-605, 623-33; Morris, Righteous Victims,286-91, 311-13, 393-95; and Van Creveld, The Sword and the Olive, 137-38, 179-82,239-43.16. Israel's economy suffered a downturn in 2001-02, after the start of the SecondIntifada inOctober 2000. Most experts believe, however, that the global economic meltdown waslargely responsible for that downturn. An article in Forbes in late May 2002summarizes theconventional wisdom: "The Israeli government and private economists estimate thattwothirdsof the savage tumble in Israel's GDP growth, from 6.4% in 2000 to a current rate ofzero, was due not to terrorism but to the worldwide slump led by high-tech." DavidSimons,"Cold Calculation of Terror," Forbes, May 28, 2002. The economy rebounded in2003-05,even though the Palestinian uprising continued. Also see Emma Clark, "Israel'sNeglectedEconomy," BBC News (online), September 2, 2002; Nadav Morag, "The Economic andSocialEffects of Intensive Terrorism: Israel, 2000—2004," Middle East Review ofInternationalAffairs 10, no. 3 (September 2006); Neal Sandler, "Israel's Economy: As if theIntifadaWeren't Enough," BusinessWeek, June 18, 2001; and Linda Sharaby, "Israel's EconomicGrowth: Success Without Security," Middle East Review of International Affairs 6, no.3(September 2002).

17. Amos Harel, "Israel Maintains Its Strategic Advantage, Says Jaffee Center,"Haaretz,November 23, 2005. Also see Uri Bar-Joseph, "The Paradox of Israeli Power," Survival46,no. 4 (Winter 2004-05); and Martin Van Creveld, "Opportunity Beckons," JerusalemPost,May 16, 2003. The Jaffee Center has now been incorporated into a new institution, theInstitutefor National Strategic Studies.18. Alan Dershowitz, "Debunking the Newest—and Oldest—Jewish Conspiracy: A Reply tothe Mearsheimer-Walt 'Working Paper,'" John F. Kennedy School of Government FacultyResearch Working Paper, Harvard University, April 2006, 22; and Martin Peretz,"Killer Angels:Murdering Jews, Then and Now," New Republic, April 15, 2002, 17-18.19. Morris, 1948 and After, 11—12. The subsequent Morris quotation in this paragraphis fromibid., 13.20. Shlomo Ben-Ami, Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy (NewYork: OxfordUniversity Press, 2006), 35-36. Also see Flapan, Birth of Israel, 119-52.21. This conventional wisdom is reflected in Michael B. Oren, "Did Israel Want theSix-DayWar?" Azure 5759, no. 7 (Spring 1999); and Michael B. Oren, Six Days of War: June1967and the Making of the Modern Middle East (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).22. The best new works on the origins of the 1967 war include

Ben-Ami, Scars of War,96-114;Norman G. Finkelstein, "Abba Eban with Footnotes," Journal of Palestine Studies 32,no. 3(Spring 2003); Roland Popp, "Stumbling Decidedly into the Six-Day War," Middle EastJournal60, no. 2 (Spring 2006); and Tom Segev, 1967: Israel, the War, and the Year ThatTransformedthe Middle East, trans. Jessica Cohen (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

23. Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (New York: Norton, 2000),237.24. Ibid., 235. Also see Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Israel and Syria: Correcting theRecord," WashingtonPost, December 24, 1999.

25. Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 100.26. Segev, 1967, 202-12, 295-96.27. Quoted in ibid., 300. Also see ibid., 387-88.28. Quoted in Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 76-77.29. Morris, Righteous Victims, 387. Also see John J. Mearsheimer, ConventionalDeterrence(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 155-62.30. Quoted in Mearsheimer, Conventional Deterrence, 159.31. Yoram Meital, Peace in Tatters: Israel, Palestine, and the Middle East (Boulder,CO: LynneRienner, 2006), 148-52; Charles A. Radin, "Arabs Offer to Accept Israel withConditions,"Boston Globe, March 29, 2002; and Howard Schneider, "Arab Countries UnanimouslyEndorseSaudi Peace Plan," Washington Post, March 29, 2002.32. According to the Law of Return, a "Jew" is defined as "a person who was born of aJewishmother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of anotherreligion."The actual law and the relevant amendments can be found at Israel's Ministry ofForeign Affairswebsite, www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1950_1959/Law%20of%20Return%2057101950.There has recently been discussion in Israel about passing legislation to recognizeasJewish those individuals who have a Jewish father but not a Jewish mother. See ShaharIlan,"Bill Would Recognize Judaism Through Father," Haaretz, March 12, 2006.33. The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel can be found in JohnNortonMoore, ed., The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Readings and Documents (Princeton: PrincetonUniversityPress, 1977), 934-37.34. David Ben-Gurion, Israel: A Personal History, trans. Nechemia Meyers and UzyNystar(New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1971), 839.35. These numbers are based on Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract ofIsrael, 2006,Table 2.1, wwwl .cbs.gov.il/reader/; and Palestinian Academic Society for the Studyof InternationalAffairs, Palestine Facts and Info, "Population," www.passia.org/palestine_facts/facts_and_figures/0_facts_and_figures.htm. There are about 300,000 individuals livinginIsrael who are defined as "others" by the CBS. Most of them are family members ofJewishimmigrants or are individuals who have Jewish ancestors but not a Jewish mother, andare

therefore not categorized as Jewish by the Israeli government. If one categorizesthem as

Jewish, then the total number of Jews in Israel would be about 5.6 million, not 5.3million,

which is the number the CBS uses.

36. A public opinion survey of Israeli Jews taken in February-

March 2007 concludedthat "thedemographic challenge is of growing urgency to most of the Jewish population andhelps definethe collective approach to national security issues." Yehuda Ben Meir and DafnaShaked, "The People Speak: Israeli Public Opinion on National Security, 2005-2007,"Memorandum no. 90 (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, May 2007), 10,64-65. Also see Aluf Benn, "Israel's Identity Crisis," Salon.com, May 16, 2005;LarryDerfner, "Sounding the Alarm About Israel's Demographic Crisis," Forward, January 9,2004; Jon E. Dougherty, "Will Israel Become an Arab State?" NewsMax.com, January 12,2004; Lily Galili, "A Jewish Demographic State," Haaretz, June 28, 2002; and GideonLevy,"Wombs in the Service of the State," Haaretz, September 9, 2002.

37. Shulamit Aloni, "A Country for Some of Its Citizens?" Haaretz, February 24, 2007.TheBasic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty can be found on the Knesset website, www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3_eng.htm.38. Jonathan Cook, Blood and Religion: The Unmasking of the Jewish and DemocraticState (AnnArbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006), 17-18. Also see Adalah and the Arab Association forHumanRights, "Equal Rights and Minority Rights for the Palestinian Arab Minority inIsrael," a reportto the UN Human Rights Committee on Israel's Implementation of Articles 26 and 27of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, July 1998; As'adGhanem,Nadim Rouhana, and Oren Yiftachel, "Questioning 'Ethnic Democracy': A Response toSammy Smooha," Israel Studies 3, no. 2 (Fall 1998); David B. Green, "The OtherIsraelis,"Boston Globe, February 25, 2007; Human Rights Watch, Second Class: DiscriminationAgainst Palestinian Arab Children in Israel's Schools (New York, September 2001),chap. 8;Frances Raday, "Religion, Multiculturalism and Equality: The Israeli Case," in IsraelYearbookon Human Rights, Vol. 25 (1995), ed. Yoram Dinstein (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff,1996), 193-241; Ahmad H. Sa'di, "Israel as Ethnic Democracy: What Are theImplicationsfor the Palestinian Minority?" Arab Studies Quarterly 22, no. 1 (Winter 2000); andSammySmooha, "Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype," Israel Studies 2, no. 2 (Fall1997).39. "The Official Summation of the Or Commission Report," published in Haaretz,September2, 2003. For evidence of how hostile many Israelis were to the report's findings andrecommendations,see "No Avoiding the Commission Recommendations," Haaretz editorial, September4, 2003; and Molly Moore, "Israelis Look Inward After Critical Report," WashingtonPost, September 3, 2003. Also see Bernard Avishai, "Saving Israel from Itself: ASecular Futurefor the Jewish State," Harper's, January 2005; Ian Lustick, Arabs in the JewishState: Israel'sControl of a National Minority (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); and ChrisMcGreal, "Worlds Apart," Guardian, February 6, 2006.40. Roee Nahmias, "Marriage to an Arab Is National Treason," Ywetwews.com, March 27,2007;and Yoav Stern, "Poll: 50% of Israeli Jews Support State-Backed Arab Emigration,"Haaretz,March 27, 2007. For similar results in a 2006 survey, see Eli Ashkenazi and JackKhoury,"Poll: 68% of Jews Would Refuse to Live in Same Building as an Arab," Haaretz, March22,2006; Chris McGreal, "41% of Israel's Jews Favor Segregation," Guardian, March 24,2006;Sharon Roffe-Ofir, "Poll: Israeli Jews Shun Arabs," Ywetwews.com, March 22, 2006;andKenneth J. Theisen, "Racism Alive and Well in Israel?" Pittsburgh Independent MediaCenter(online), June 1, 2006.41. Israeli Democracy Institute, "The Democracy Index: Major Findings 2003."

Thissummaryof the report can be found at www.idi.org.il/english/article.asp?id=1466.42. According to a 2007 public opinion survey, 63 percent of Israeli Jews opposeincluding anArab minister in the cabinet. In 2004, 75 percent opposed the idea, while 60 percentopposedit in 2005 and 2006. Ben Meir and Shaked, "The People Speak," 80. Also see ibid.,22, 79-82; Orly Halpern, "Arab Cabinet Pick Stirs 'Zionism-Racism' Debate," Forward,January19, 2007; Gil Hoffman, "'Majadleh Slot the End of Zionism,'" Jerusalem Post, January10,

2007; Ronny Sofer, "Cabinet Approves First Arab Minister," Ynetnews.com, January 28,

2007; and Scott Wilson, "In First, Arab Muslim Joins Israeli Cabinet," WashingtonPost, January29, 2007.

43. Quoted in Justin Huggler, "Israel Imposes 'Racist' Marriage Law," Independent,August 1,2003. Also see James Bennet, "Israel Blocks Palestinians from Marrying intoResidency,"New York Times, July 31, 2003; "Racist Legislation," Haaretz editorial, July, 19,2004;"Racist Legislation," Haaretz editorial, January 18, 2005; and Shahar Ilan, "LawDenyingFamily Unification to Israelis and Palestinians Extended," Haaretz, March 21, 2007.Eventhe Anti-Defamation League criticized the legislation, albeit mildly. Nathan Guttman,YairEttinger, and Sharon Sadeh, "ADL Criticizes Law Denying Citizenship to PalestiniansWhoMarry Israelis," Haaretz, August 5, 2003.44. Quoted in Tovah Tzimuki, "Government Supports Revocation of Citizenship,"Ynetnews.com, January 8, 2007. Also see Saed Bannoura, "Israeli Knesset Passes Law toRevokeCitizenship of'UnpatrioticTsraelis," International Middle East Media Center(online),January 10, 2007; Sheera Claire Frenkel, "'Disloyalty' Bill Passes First Hurdle,"JerusalemPost, January 10, 2007; Tom Segev, "Conditional Citizenship," Haaretz, January 11,2007;and Yuval Yoaz, "Government to Back Bill Allowing Court to Rescind Traitors'Citizenship,"Haaretz, January 7, 2007.45. Quoted in Larry Derfner, "Rattling the Cage: A Bigot Called Bibi,"Jerusalem Post,January 3,2007. Also see Aluf Benn and Gideon Alon, "Netanyahu: Israel's Arabs Are the RealDemographicThreat," Haaretz, December 18, 2003; Ron Dermer, "The Nerve of Bibi,"JerusalemPost, January 9, 2007; Karina's Kolumn (Karina Robinson), "Benjamin Netanyahu:Israel'sPrime Minister in Waiting," Banker (online), July 1, 2004; and Neta Sela, "Netanyahu:PensionsCut—Arabs' Birth Rate Declined," Ynetnews.com, January 3, 2007.46. These statements are not isolated examples. In early 2004, for example, DeputyDefenseMinister Ze'ev Boim suggested that Palestinian terrorism is due to a "geneticblemish." Hisviews were supported by another member of the Knesset, who said that terrorism is "intheirblood," which is why an Arab "will stab you in the back" if you "turn your back" onhim. EvenBenny Morris, the historian whose earlier scholarship has done so much to revealIsrael'strue policies toward the Palestinians, has nonetheless referred to them as"barbarians" whoshould be treated like "serial killers." Begins comment is from Amnon Kapeliuk,"Begin andthe 'Beasts,'" New Statesman, June 25, 1982, 12. Eitan's comments are from David K.Shipler, "Most West Bank Arabs Blaming U.S. for Impasse," New York Times, April 14,1983;and Uzi Benziman, Sharon: An Israeli Caesar (New York: Adama Books, 1985), 264.Ya'alon'scomment is

from Ari Shavit, "The Enemy Within," Haaretz, August 27, 2002. Boim'scommentand his supporter's comments are from Yuval Yoaz, "AG: Ethics Committee to ProbeRacist Comments Made by MKs," Haaretz, August 10, 2004. Morris's comment is from AriShavit, "Survival of the Fittest," Haaretz, January 9, 2004.47. Larry Derfner, "Rattling the Cage: The Racism of Israeli Youth," Jerusalem Post,January 17,2007. Also see Ahiya Raved, "Youth Believe Arabs Dirty, Uneducated," Ywetwews.com,January9, 2007.48. Quoted in Ben Lynfield, "The Rise of Avigdor Lieberman," Nation, December 14,

2006.Also see Uri Avnery, "The Lovable Man? Lieberman and the Decline of IsraeliDemocracy,"Antiwar.com, November 3, 2006; Akiva Eldar, "Let's Hear It for the Haiders," Haaretz,October30, 2006; Leonard Fein, "The Fantasies of Avigdor Lieberman," Forward, October 20,2006; Gershom Gorenberg, "The Minister for National Fears," Atlantic, May 2007; andHenrySiegman, "Hurricane Carter," Nation, January 22, 2007. Effi Eitam, the former head oftheNational Religious party, and Rehavam Ze'evi, an Israeli general who founded theright-wingMoledet party, were the previous government ministers who spoke out in favor oftransfer.49. "The Democracy Index: Major Findings 2003"; Yulie Khromchenko, "Survey: MostJewishIsraelis Support Transfer of Arabs," Haaretz, June 22, 2004; Yoav Stern, "Poll: MostIsraeliJews Say Israeli Arabs Should Emigrate," Haaretz, April 4, 2005; McGreal, "41% ofIsrael's

Jews"; Amiram Barkat and Jack Khoury, "Poll: Gov't Should Help Arab CitizensEmigrate,"

Haaretz, May 10, 2006; and Roffe-Ofir, "Poll." Also see Uzi Arad, "Swap Meet:Trading

Land for Peace," New Republic, November 28 and December 5, 2005; Amnon Barzilai,

"More Israeli Jews Favor Transfer of Palestinians, Israeli Arabs—Poll Finds,"Haaretz, Oc

tober 10, 2005; Arik Carmon, "A Blot on Israeli Democracy," Haaretz, December 12,2005;

Evelyn Gordon, "No Longer the Political Fringe," Jerusalem Post, September 14, 2006;Ben

Lynfield, "Israeli Expulsion Idea Gains Steam," Christian Science Monitor, February6,

2002; Stern, "Poll: 50% of Israeli Jews"; Matthew Wagner, "New Proposal:Transfer-for-

Cash Plan," Jerusalem Post, January 21, 2007; and Steven I. Weiss, "Israeli RightistCalls for

Transfer of Arabs," Forward, September 15, 2006.

50. BTselem, "The Scope of Israeli Control in the Gaza Strip,"www.btselem.org/english/Gaza_Strip/Gaza_Status.asp; David Sharrock, "Israel's 'Invisible Hand' Still ControlsGaza,Says Report," Times (London), January 15, 2007; and Scott Wilson, "For Gaza, aQuestionof Responsibility," Washington Post, March 21, 2007.51. Jan Egeland and Jan Eliasson, "La catastrophe humaine de Gaza est une bombe àretardement,"Figaro (online), September 28, 2006. Also see Steven Erlanger, "As Parents GoUnpaid,Gaza Children Go Hungry," New York Times, September 14, 2006; Steven Erlanger,"Years of Strife and Lost Hope Scar Young Palestinians," New York Times, March 12,2007;Donald Macintyre, "Gaza in Danger of Turning into a 'Giant Prison,' Says MideastEnvoy,"Independent, November 14, 2005; Rory McCarthy, "Occupied Gaza Like Apartheid SouthAfrica, Says UN Report," Guardian, February 23, 2007; Sara Roy, "The Economy ofGaza,"

Znet (online), October 9, 2006; Mohammed Samhouri, "Looking Beyond the Numbers:The Palestinian Socioeconomic Crisis of 2006," Middle East Brief no. 16, CrownCenterfor Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, February 2007; United Nations Officefor theCoordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Statement on Gaza by United NationsHumanitarianAgencies Working in the Occupied Palestinian Territory," August 3, 2006; andOCHA, "The Humanitarian Monitor: Occupied Palestinian Territory," no. 10, February2007.52. "Making the Law a Laughingstock," Haaretz editorial, December 31, 2006.53. Steven Erlanger, "West Bank Sites on Private Land, Data Shows," NewYork Times,March 14,2007; Nadav Shragai, "Peace Now: 32% of Land Held for Settlements Is PrivateProperty,"Haaretz, March 14, 2007. Also see Greg Myre, "For West Bank, It's a Highway toFrustration,"NewYork Times, November 18, 2006; and "Legitimization of Land Theft," Haaretzeditorial,February 27, 2007.54. The first wave of European Jews to come to Palestine is known as the FirstAliyah, and itcovers the years from 1882 to 1903. There were slightly more than fifteen thousandJews inPalestine in 1882 according to the Ottoman census. Justin McCarthy, The PopulationofPalestine: Population History and Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and theMandate (NewYork: Columbia University Press, 1990), 10-13, has excellent data for the years from1850to 1915. However, McCarthy's numbers, which are based on Ottoman census figures,exclude"an unknown number of Jewish immigrants who had kept their original citizenship."He notes further that "there would have been relatively few non-citizen Jews at thatearlydate" and estimates the number as "perhaps one to two thousand." Thus the upper boundisprobably seventeen thousand Jews in Palestine in 1882. Also see Mark Tessler, AHistory ofthe Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 124.55. The total population of Palestine in 1893 was roughly 530,000, of whom about19,000(3.6 percent) were Jewish. Arabs comprised the vast majority of the remainingpopulation.McCarthy, Population of Palestine, 10.56. This issue was revisited in the mid-1980s when Joan Peters published From TimeImmemorial:The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict over Palestine (NewYork: Harper, 1984). Sheclaimed that when the Jews began arriving in Palestine from Europe, there were farfewerArabs there than the conventional wisdom maintained, and that the Arabs moved toPalestinein large numbers only after the Jews began to develop the land. Peters's book was en

thusiastically endorsed by a large number of prominent American

Jews. However,shortly afterits publication, a number of scholars showed that not only was From Time Immemorialbased on a "highly tendentious use—or neglect—of the available source material," butitscore thesis was dead wrong. Yehoshua Porath, "Mrs. Peters's Palestine," New YorkReview ofBooks, January 16, 1986. In a conversation with the New York Times, Porath, adistinguishedIsraeli historian, said that Peters s book was "a sheer forgery" and that in Israelit "was almostuniversally dismissed as sheer rubbish except maybe as a propaganda weapon." ColinCampbell,"Dispute Flares over Book on Claims to Palestine," New York Times, November 28,1985. Also see Norman G. Finkelstein, Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine

Conflict(London: Verso, 2001), chap. 2.

57. Laurence J. Silberstein, The Postzionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in IsraeliCulture(New York: Routledge, 1999), 51.58. Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 9.59. There were about 1.2 million Palestinians in addition to the 650,000 Jews livingin Palestinein 1948, which translates into a population that was 65 percent Palestinian and 35percentJewish. See Morris, 1948 and After, 14. Flapan uses population figures in which theJewsare 33 percent of the population (Birth of Israel, 44), while Morris uses 37 percentin RighteousVictims (186).60. Some believe that Ben-Gurion and his followers had less ambitious territorialgoals than Revisionistslike Vladimir Jabotinsky. But as Avi Shlaim makes clear, "The difference between[Ben-Gurion] and the Revisionists was not that he was a territorial minimalist whiletheywere territorial maximalists, but rather that he pursued a gradualist strategy whilethey adheredto an all-or-nothing approach." Shlaim, Iron Wall, 21. The Zionists were careful nottosay much in public about their ultimate goals in Palestine, for fear it would angerthe Arabsand the British and undermine their enterprise. Nevertheless, Ben-Gurion laid out hisvisionof what the borders of Israel would look like in a coauthored book that was writtenin Yiddishand published in the United States in 1918. In addition to what is today Israel,Ben-Gurion'svision included the Occupied Territories, southern Lebanon up to the Litani River,part ofsouthern Syria, a large part of Jordan, and the Sinai Peninsula. Morris, RighteousVictims, 75.61. Flapan, Birth of Israel, 103-104; and Morris, Birth Revisited, 69.62. These quotes are from Flapan, Birth of Israel, 22; and Shlaim, Iron Wall, 21. Fora more detaileddiscussion of the early Zionists' thinking about partition, see Mearsheimer andWalt,"Setting the Record Straight," 33-37 .63. Uri Ben-Eliezer, The Making of Israeli Militarism (Bloomington: IndianaUniversity Press,1998), 150.64. Avi Shlaim, The Politics of Partition: King Abdullah, the Zionists, andPalestine, 1921-1951(New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also see Morris, 1948 and After, 10;BennyMorris, The Road to Jerusalem: Glubb Pasha, Palestine and the Jews (London: I. B.Tauris,2002); Ilan Pappe, Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951 (New York: St.Martin'sPress, 1988); and Mary C. Wilson, King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan(NewYork: Cambridge University Press, 1987).65. Benny Morris, "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948," in The War forPalestine: Rewritingthe History of 1948, ed. Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim (New York: CambridgeUniversityPress, 2001), 40. Also see Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 33-34; and Shlaim, Iron Wall, 25.66. Nur Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of "Transfer" in ZionistPoliticalThought,

1882-1948 (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992); Morris,BirthRevisited, chap. 2; and Morris, "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus," 39-48 .67. Quoted in Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians, 128. Also see Morris, RighteousVictims,140, 142, 168—69. Ben-Gurion's statement is from a memorandum he wrote prior to theExtraordinary

Zionist Conference at New York's Biltmore Hotel in May 1942.68. Quoted in Michael Bar-Zohar, Facing a Cruel Mirror: Israel's Moment of Truth (NewYork:Scribner, 1990), 16.

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69. Quoted in Shavit, "Survival of the Fittest." Also see Benny Morris, "A New Exodusfor theMiddle East?" Guardian, October 3, 2002. Ben-Gurion told the Central Committee oftheHistadrut on December 30, 1947: "In the area allocated to the Jewish state there arenotmore than 520,000 Jews and about 350,000 non-Jews, mostly Arabs. Together with theJewsof Jerusalem, the total population of the Jewish state at the time of itsestablishment, willbe about a million, including almost 40 percent non-Jews. Such a [population]compositiondoes not provide a stable basis for a Jewish state. This [demographic] fact must beviewedin all its clarity and acuteness. With such a [population] composition, there cannoteven beabsolute certainty that control will remain in the hands of the Jewish majority . . .There canbe no stable and strong Jewish state so long as it has a Jewish majority of only 60percent."Quoted in Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians, 176.70. Quoted in Morris, Righteous Victims, 169.71. Morris, "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus," 43-44.72. Morris's Birth Revisited and Pappe's Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine providedetailed accountsof this event. Also see Meron Benvenisti, Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of theHolyLand Since 1948, trans. Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta (Berkeley: University of CaliforniaPress,2000), chaps. 3-4; and Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians, chap. 5. Morris notesthat"the haphazard thinking about transfer before 1937 and the virtual consensus insupport ofthe notion from 1937 on contributed to what happened in 1948 in the sense that theyconditionedthe Zionist leadership, and below it, the officials and officers who managed thenew state's civilian and military agencies, for the transfer that took place. To onedegree oranother, these men all arrived at 1948, in no small measure owing to the continuousanti-Zionist Arab violence which played out against the growing persecution of DiasporaJewryin central and eastern Europe, with a mindset which was open to the idea andimplementationof transfer and expulsion. And the transfer that occurred—which encountered almostno serious opposition from any part of the Yishuv—transpired smoothly in largemeasure becauseof this pre-conditioning." Morris, "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus," 48.73. Erskine Childers, "The Other Exodus," Spectator, May 12, 1961; Flapan, Birth ofIsrael,81-118; Walid Khalidi, "Why Did the Palestinians Leave Revisited," Journal ofPalestineStudies 34, no. 2 (Winter 2005); Walid Khalidi, "The Fall of

Haifa," Middle EastForum 35,no. 10 (December, 1959); Morris, Birth Revisited; and Pappe, Ethnic Cleansing ofPalestine,131. To be sure, some Arab commanders did instruct Palestinian civilians to evacuatetheirhomes during the fighting, either to make sure that they did not get caught in afirefight orto ensure that they were not killed by the Zionist forces engaged in ethnicallycleansingPalestinians. Fear of death at the hands of the Jews was an especially powerfulmotive to

evacuate villages after the infamous massacre at DeirYassin, where about 100 to 110Palestinianswere murdered on April 9, 1948. Morris, Righteous Victims, 209. As Morris reports,"The IDF Intelligence Service called Deir Yassin a decisive accelerating factor' inthe generalArab exodus." Righteous Victims, 209. Orders to evacuate of this kind are not relatedtothe myth of a voluntary or elite-directed evacuation. See Ben-Ami, Scars of War,43-44.74. Quoted in Morris, Birth Revisited, 318. For more detail on the Zionists'opposition to allowingthe Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, see ibid., chap. 5.75. Baruch Kimmerling, Zionism and Territory: The Socio-Territorial Dimensions ofZionist Politics(Berkeley, CA: Institute of International Studies, 1983), 143.76. Pappe, Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, xiii. Also see Walid Khalidi, ed., All ThatRemains: ThePalestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948 (Washington, DC:Institutefor Palestine Studies, 1992), which identifies the number of villages destroyed as418, not531. The difference in the number is a result of varying definitions of whatconstituted aPalestinian village. Pappe and several other Palestinian historians include somesmallercommunities in their count of villages, while Khalidi excludes them. Correspondencebetweenauthors and Ilan Pappe, May 15, 2007.77. Quoted in Khalidi, All That Remains, xxxi.

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78. Quoted in Nahum Goldmann, The Jewish Paradox, trans. Steve Cox (NewYork: GrossetandDunlap, 1978), 99.79. Quoted in Ian Lustick, "To Build and to Be Built By: Israel and the Hidden Logicof the IronWall," Israel Studies 1, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 200.80. Quoted in Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 12.81. Geoffrey Aronson, Israel, Palestinians, and the Intifada: Creating Facts on theWest Bank(London: Kegan Paul International, 1990); Amnon Barzilai, "A Brief History of theMissedOpportunity," Haaretz, June 5, 2002; Amnon Barzilai, "Some Saw the Refugees as theKey to Peace," Haaretz, June 11, 2002; Moshe Behar, "The Peace Process and IsraeliDomesticPolitics in the 1990s," Socialism and Democracy 16, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2002);Jimmy Carter, Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid (NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 2006); AdamHanieh and Catherine Cook, "A Road Map to the Oslo Cul-de-Sac," Middle East ReportOnline, May 15, 2003; "Israel's Interests Take Primacy: An Interview with Dore Gold,"inhitterlemons.org, "What Constitutes a Viable Palestinian State?" March 15, 2004,edition 10;Baruch Kimmerling, Politicide: The Real Legacy of Ariel Sharon (London: Verso, 2003);NurMasalha, Imperial Israel and the Palestinians: The Politics of Expansion (London:PlutoPress, 2000); Tanya Reinhart, The Road Map to Nowhere: Israel/Palestine Since

2003(London:Verso, 2006); Sara Roy, "Erasing the 'Optics'of Gaza," Daily Star (online), February14,2004; and "36 Years, and Still Counting," Haaretz, September 26, 2003.82. Quoted in Rashid Khalidi, Palestinian Identity: The Construction of ModernNational Consciousness(NewYork: Columbia University Press, 1997), 147. Meir also said, "It was not asthough there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as aPalestinian peopleand we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did notexist."Quoted in Masalha, Imperial Israel, 47.83. Dayan quoted in Benny Morris, Israel's Border Wars, 1949—1956 (NewYork: Oxford

UniversityPress, 1997), 12. Regarding the views of other IDF generals, see ibid. OnBen-Gurion'sthinking, see Morris, Righteous Victims, 261, 290.84. Morris, Israel's Border Wars, 11.85. Quoted in Hanieh and Cook, "Road Map." Also see Akiva Eldar, "On the Same Page,TenYears On," Haaretz, November 5, 2005; David Grossman, "The Night Our Hope for PeaceDied," Guardian, November 4, 2005; and Michael Jansen, "A Practice That 'PreventstheEmergence of a Palestinian State,'" Jordan Times (online), November 10, 2005. ShlomoBen-Ami makes it clear that not only Rabin but also his immediate successor, ShimonPeres, was opposed to creating a Palestinian state. Scars of War, 220. Finally, aclear majorityof Israelis were opposed to creating a Palestinian state during Rabin's tenure asprimeminister (1992-95). It was not until 1997 that at least half of Israeli Jewssupported the establishmentof a Palestinian state. At the time of the 1993 Oslo Accords, 35 percent favoredcreating a Palestinian state. Ben Meir and Shaked, "The People Speak," 64-65.86. Hillary Clinton quoted in Tom Rhodes and Christopher Walker, "Congress TellsIsrael to RejectClinton's Pullout Plan," Times (London), May 8, 1998. On the White House response,see James Bennet, "Aides Disavow Mrs. Clinton on Mideast," New York Times, May 8,1998.Also see Robin Dorf, "News Analysis: What Motivated Hillary's Call for a PalestinianState?" JTA.org, May 15, 1998; "Hillary's Folly," Jewish Week editorial, May 15,1998; andBrian Knowlton, "Mrs. Clinton Starts Storm by Backing 'Palestine,'" InternationalHeraldTribune, May 8, 1998.87. "Ex-PM Shamir Objects to Palestinian State, but Still Supports Sharon," Haaretz,November26, 2002; Benjamin Netanyahu, "A Limited Palestinian State," Washington Post, June20,2003. In a 1998 interview, Shamir said that Israel's boundaries ran "from the borderof thekingdom of Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea" and said the "greatest danger" facingIsraelwas "the establishment of a Palestinian state in Israel." See "Yitzhak Shamir: ALifetime ofActivism," Middle East Quarterly 6, no. 2 (June 1999).88. In a speech in October 2005, President Ahmadinejad reportedly called for Israelto be"wiped off the map," a statement widely interpreted as threatening the physicaldestruction

of the Jewish state and its inhabitants. A more accurate translation of Ahmadinejad'sstate

ment is "the occupation regime over Jerusalem should vanish from the page of time"(or al

ternatively, "be eliminated from the pages of history"). Instead of calling for thephysical

destruction of Israel, Ahmadinejad was suggesting that Israel's control overJerusalem and

Palestine should be seen as a temporary condition that should be reversed, likeSoviet con

trol of Eastern Europe or the shah's regime in Iran. While still provocative andhighly objec

tionable, calling for the political dismantlement of the Jewish state in Palestine isnot the

same as calling for the physical destruction of Israel or its population. See EthanBronner,

"Just How Far Did They Go, Those Words Against Israel?" New York Times, June 11,2006;

Jonathan Steele, "Lost in Translation," Guardian, June 14, 2006; and "IranianPresident at

Tehran Conference: Very Soon, This Stain of Disgrace [i.e., Israel] Will Be Purgedfrom the

Center of the Islamic World—and This Is Attainable,'" Middle East Media ResearchInsti

tute, Special Dispatch Series no. 1013, October 28, 2005.

89. "Bombs," New Republic editorial, August 27 & September 3, 2001; Martin Peretz,"GoodFight," New Republic, May 27, 2002; and Martin Peretz, "Blows to Israel Must NeverGoUnanswered," Los Angeles Times, September 5, 2003. Regarding Dershowitz, his mostrelevantwork is The Case for Israel (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2003). For an incisive critiqueofthat book, see Norman G. Finkelstein, Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse ofAnti-Semitismand the Abuse of History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Also seeMichaelDesch, "The Chutzpah of Alan Dershowitz," American Conservative, December 5, 2005;and "Dershowitz v. Desch," American Conservative, January 16, 2006.90. Yaakov Katz, "'IDF the Most Moral Army in the World,'" Jerusalem Post, June 11,2006;Leslie Susser, "Israelis Question Army Morality," JewishJournal.com, December 17,2004;and "Cabinet Communique," Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 12, 2004,www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Communiques/2004/Cabinet%20Communique%2012Dec-2004. Also see Richard Cohen, "Truth Massacred," Washington Post, August 6, 2002;and Neve Gordon, "Israel's Slippery Moral Slope," In These Times (online), January31, 2003.91. Meron Benvenisti, "The Model of the Mythological Sabra," Haaretz, September 12,2002.92. Morris, Righteous Victims, chaps. 2—5.93. Quoted in Shabtai Teveth, Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground, 1886-1948 (Boston:Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 544.94. Morris, Birth Revisited. Many Israeli documents concerning the events of 1948remain classified;Morris anticipates "that with respect to both expulsions and atrocities, we

canexpectadditional revelations as the years pass and more Israeli records become available."Morris,"Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus," 49. In fact, he maintains that the reportedcases of rapehe knows about are "just the tip of the iceberg." See Shavit, "Survival of theFittest."95. Quoted in Pappe, Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, 69. For background onBen-Gurion's comment,see ibid., 61-72.96. Morris, Israel's Border Wars, 432. Also see ibid., 126-53, 178-84.97. Gabby Bron, "Egyptian POWs Ordered to Dig Graves, Then Shot by Israeli Army,"YediothAhronoth, August 17, 1995; Ronal Fisher, "Mass Murder in the 1956 Sinai War,"Ma'ariv,August 8, 1995 (copies of these two pieces can be found in Journal of PalestineStudies 25,no. 3 [Spring 1996]: 148-55); Galal Bana, "Egypt: We Will Turn to the InternationalWar

Crimes Tribunal in the Hague If Israel Will Not Compensate Murdered Prisoners ofWar,"Haaretz, July 24, 2002; Zehavit Friedman, "Personal Reminiscence: Remembering AmiKronfeld," in Jewish Voice for Peace, Jewish Peace News (online), September 25,2005;Katherine M. Metres, "As Evidence Mounts, Toll of Israeli Prisoner of War MassacresGrows," Washington Report on Middle East Affairs (online), February/March 1996; RoeeNahmias, "Egypt May Petition Hague over 'Murder of POWs,'" Ynetnews.com, March 6,2007; Roee Nahmias, "Former Meretz Leader Decries 1967 War Crimes," Ynetnews.com,March 3, 2007; Meron Rapoport, "Into the Valley of Death," Haaretz, February 13,2007;and Segev, 1967, 371-76.98. Avnery, "Crying Wolf?" CounterPunch.org, March 15, 2003; Robert Blecher, "Livingon the

NOTES TO PAGES 99-100

Edge: The Threat of 'Transfer' in Israel and Palestine," MERIP, Middle East Re-portOnline225 (Winter 2002); Kimmerling, Politicide, 28. Also see Noam Chomsky, FatefulTriangle:The United States, Israel and the Palestinians, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: South EndPress,1999), 97; Morris, Righteous Victims, 328-29 ; Tanya Reinhart, Israel/ Palestine: Howto Endthe War of 1948 (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002), 8; Tom Segev, "The Spirit oftheKing David Hotel," Haaretz, July 23, 2006; and Segev, 1967, 400-12, 523-42. Morrisreportsthat 120,000 Palestinians applied to return to their homes right after the 1967 war,butIsrael allowed only about 17,000 to come back. Righteous Victims, 329.

99. Avnery, "Crying Wolf?"; Ami Kronfeld, "Avnery on Ethnic Cleansing and a PersonalNote,"in Jewish Voice for Peace, Jewish Peace News (online), March 17, 2003; and Metres,"As EvidenceMounts."100. Danny Rubinstein, "Roads, Fences and Outposts Maintain Control in theTerritories,"Haaretz, August 12, 2003.101. "Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Events at the Refugee Camps inBeirut,"February 7, 1983. The report is commonly called "the Kahan Commission Report" afteritschairman, Yitzhak Kahan. Also see Morris, Righteous Victims, 542—49; and Shlaim,IronWall, 415-17 . Israeli soldiers did not do the killing at Sabra and Shatila; it wasdone by aLebanese Christian militia (Phalangists) allied with Israel. After the IDF encircledthe twoPalestinian refugee camps, Sharon "ordered the IDF to allow the Phalangists to enterthe . . . camps." The Phalangists and the Palestinians were not only bitter enemies,but thePhalangists were bent on revenge because their leader had just been assassinated.Theywere almost certain to massacre the

Palestinians, a point that Israeli leadersinvolved in theoperation knew or should have known. Once the killing started, Israeli soldiersquickly becameaware that a massacre was taking place "but did nothing to stop it." Shlaim, IronWall,416. President Bush has hailed former prime minister Ariel Sharon as a "man ofpeace," butquestions concerning violence against civilians have dogged him for years. Forexample, in1953, he commanded a unit that attacked the Jordanian town of Qibya and killedsixty-ninecivilians; two-thirds of them were women and children. According to Benny Morris,"Sharonand the IDF subsequently claimed the villagers had hidden in cellars and attics and

thetroops had been unaware of this when they blew up the buildings. But in truth thetroopshad moved from house to house, firing through windows and doorways, and Jordanianpathologists reported that most of the dead had been killed by bullets and shrapnelratherthan by falling masonry or explosions. In any event, the operational orders, from COCentralCommand to the units involved . . . had explicitly ordered 'destruction and maximumkilling.'" Righteous Victims, 278. Also see ibid., 276-79, 294-95, 494-560;Benziman,Sharon; Uzi Benziman, "The Cock's Arrogance," Haaretz, June 15, 2003; Thomas L.Friedman,From Beirut to Jerusalem (NewYork: Anchor Books, 1990), chaps. 6-7; Kimmerling,Politicide; Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, trans. Ina Friedman(NewYork:Simon & Schuster, 1984), 250-85; and Shlaim, Iron Wall, 90-92, 149-50, 384-423.102. Perry Anderson, "Scurrying Towards Bethlehem," New Left Review 10 (July-August2001): 5.103. Morris, Righteous Victims, 341. For a detailed account of how Israel treats thePalestiniansin the Occupied Territories, see Amira Hass, Reporting from Ramallah: An IsraeliJournalistin an Occupied Land, ed. and trans. Rachel Leah Jones (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e),2003).On Israel's use of torture, see BTselem and Hamoked (Center for the Defense of theIndividual),"Utterly Forbidden: The Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Detainees," draftreport, Jerusalem, April 2007; Glenn Frankel, "Prison Tactics a Longtime Dilemma forIsrael,"Washington Post, June 16, 2004; Ron Kampeas, "State Report Claims Israel TorturesPalestinian Detainees," JTA.org, March 8, 2007; Public Committee Against Torture inIsrael,"Ticking Bombs': Testimonies of Torture Victims in Israel," draft report, Jerusalem,May 2007; William F. Schulz, "An Israeli Interrogator, and a Tale of Torture," letterto NewYork Times, December 27, 2004; and Aviram Zino, "Report: High Court Permits TortureofPalestinians," Ywetwews.com, May 30, 2007. Israel has also been accused by B'Tselemof usingPalestinian children as human shields. See "Israeli Soldiers Use Palestinian Minorsand

NOTES TO PAGES 100-101 389an Adult as Human Shields in the Operation in Nablus," B'Tselem news release,Jerusalem,March 8, 2007.104. The data and the quotes in this paragraph and the next one are from Swedish Savethe Children,"The Status of Palestinian Children During the Uprising in the OccupiedTerritories,"Excerpted Summary Material, Jerusalem, January 1990, in Journal of Palestine Studies19,no. 4 (Summer 1990): 136-46. Also see Joshua Brilliant, "Officer Tells CourtVillagers WereBound, Gagged and Beaten. 'Not Guilty' Plea at 'Break Bones' Trial,"Jerusalem Post,March 30,1990; Joshua Brilliant, "'Rabin Ordered Beatings,' Meir Tells Military

Court,"JerusalemPost, June 22, 1990; Jackson Diehl, "Rights Group Accuses Israel of Violence AgainstChildrenin Palestinian Uprising," Washington Post, May 17, 1990; James A. Graff, "CripplingaPeople: Palestinian Children and Israeli State Violence," Alif 13 (1993); Morris,RighteousVictims, 586-95; and Ronald R. Stockton, "Intifada Deaths," Journal of PalestineStudies 19,no. 4 (Summer 1990).105. "Unbridled Force," Haaretz editorial, March 16, 2003. For other evidence, seeJonathanCook, "Impunity on Both Sides of the Green Line," MERIP, Middle East Report Online,

November23, 2005; "When Everything Is Permissible," Haaretz editorial, June 6, 2005; "ItCan Happen Here," Haaretz editorial, November 22, 2004; Chris McGreal, "Snipers withChildren in Their Sights," Guardian, June 28, 2005; Chris McGreal, "Israel Shocked byImageof Soldiers Forcing Violinist to Play at Roadblock," Guardian, November 29, 2004;GregMyre, "Former Israeli Soldiers Tell of Harassment of Palestinians," New York Times,June24, 2004; Reuven Pedatzur, "The Message to the Soldiers Was Clear," Haaretz,December13, 2004; and Conal Urquhart, "Israeli Soldiers Tell of Indiscriminate Killings byArmy anda Culture of Impunity," Guardian, September 6, 2005.106. Reuvan Pedatzur, "More than a Million Bullets," Haaretz, June 29, 2004; andClayton E.Swisher, The Truth About Camp David: The Untold Story About the Collapse of theMiddleEast Peace Process (New York: Nation Books, 2004), 387-88.107. These figures cover the period between September 29, 2000, and December 31,2005, andare taken from B'Tselem press release, January 4, 2006.108. Nathan Guttman, "'It's a Terrible Thing, Living with the Knowledge That YouCrushedOur Daughter,'" Haaretz, April 30, 2004; Joshua Hammer, "The Death of RachelCorrie,"MotherJones.com, September/October 2003; Adam Shapiro, "Remembering Rachel Corrie,"Nation, March 18, 2004; and Tsahar Rotem, "British Peace Activist Shot by IDF TroopsinGaza Strip," Haaretz, April 11, 2003.109. Amnesty International reports that since the Second Intifada began in the fallof 2000, "Israeliauthorities have routinely failed to investigate allegations of unlawful killings andotherabuses of Palestinians by Israeli forces and settlers . . . Israeli forces havekilled thousandsof Palestinians, many of them unlawfully, yet scarcely any such incidents have beeninvestigatedproperly and fewer still have resulted in the perpetrator being brought to justice .. .In the very few cases in which the Israeli authorities have conducted seriousinvestigationsinto killings of Palestinians, resulting prosecutions have generally beenunsuccessful or haveresulted in the imposition of sentences that were not commensurate with the gravityof theoffense." Amnesty International, "Road to Nowhere," December 2006, 27-28.110. For a detailed discussion of Israeli behavior toward the Palestinians that makesextensiveuse of reports from different human rights groups, see Finkelstein, Beyond Chutzpah,chaps. 4-9.111. Quoted in Molly Moore, "Ex-Security Chiefs Turn on Sharon," Washington Post,November 15,2003; "Ex-Shin Bet Heads Warn of'Catastrophe'Without Peace Deal," Haaretz, November15, 2003. These comments were based on an interview in the Israeli newspaper YediothAhronoth on November 14, 2003. A copy of the interview, titled "We Are SeriouslyConcernedAbout the

Fate of the State of Israel," can be found on the Global Policy Forumwebsite,www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/israel-palestine/2003/1118fate.htm.112. For example, B'Tselem reported that "in July [2006], the Israeli military killed163 Palestiniansin the Gaza Strip, 78 of whom (48 percent) were not taking part in the hostilitieswhen

390 NOTES TO PAGES 101-104they were killed. Thirty-six of the fatalities were minors, and 20 were women. In theWestBank, 15 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in July. The number ofPalestinian fatalities

in July was the highest in any month since April 2002." August 3, 2006, pressrelease,www.btselem.org/english/Press_Releases/20060803.asp. Amnesty International reportsthat from June 27, 2006, the date the IDF moved back into Gaza, through the end ofNovember2006, Israeli forces "killed more than 400 Palestinians and injured more than 1500others in the Gaza Strip, including many unarmed civilians. Some 80 of those killedwerechildren and more than 300 children were injured. In the same period, two Israelicivilianswere killed and some 20 were injured in the south of Israel by rockets fired byPalestinianarmed groups from Gaza." "Road to Nowhere," 8-9.113. Quoted in Rory McCarthy, "UN Condemns Massive Human Rights Abuses in GazaStrip,"Guardian, November 21, 2006. For descriptions of the pain that the IDF has inflictedonthe Palestinians living in Gaza, see Amnesty International, "Road to Nowhere," 7-13;Gideon Levy, "Gaza's Darkness," Haaretz, September 3, 2006; and OCHA, "TheHumanitarianMonitor."114. Quoted in Bill Maxwell, "U.S. Should Reconsider Aid to Israel," St. PetersburgTimes (online),December 16, 2001. Also see Ron Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?"Survival 43, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 37.115. Indeed, had Israel lost the Six-Day War in 1967 and some Arab ruler kept itspopulationsubjugated in the same conditions that the Palestinians have endured, the Israeliswould almostcertainly have used terrorism against their oppressors, and some Jews in thediasporaalmost certainly would have mobilized to aid them, just as Irish Americans andoverseasTamils have backed terrorist groups in their ancestral homelands.116. Morris, Righteous Victims, 147, 201. Also see Lenni Brenner, The Iron Wall:Zionist Revisionismfrom Jabotinsky to Shamir (London: Zed Books, 1984), 100; and Yehoshua Porath,The Palestinian Arab National Movement: From Riots to Rebellion, Vol. 2, 1929-1939(London:Frank Cass, 1977), 238. Morris notes that during the 1948 war, the main Jewishterroristgroups "knowingly planted bombs in bus stops with the aim of killing non-combatants,including women and children." Birth Revisited, 80.117. J. Bowyer Bell, Terror Out of Zion: The Fight for Israeli Independence 1929-1949(NewBrunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1996), 103-253; Johann Hari, "Israel ShouldRememberIts Own 'Terrorist' Origins," Independent, July 24, 2006; Joseph Heller, The SternGang: Ideology, Politics and Terror, 1940-1949 (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1995);BruceHoffmann, The Failure of British Military Strategy Within Palestine, 1939-1947(Israel: Bar-Ilan University, 1983); Morris, Righteous Victims, 173-80; and Tom Segev, OnePalestine,Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate, trans. Haim Watzman (New York:Henry Holt, 2000), chap. 22. According to Haim

Levenberg, 210 of the 429 casualtiesfromJewish terrorism in Palestine during 1946 were civilians. The other 219 were policeand soldiers.See Levenberg, Military Preparations, 72.118. Bell, Terror Out of Zion, 336-40.119. Quoted in Chomsky, Fateful Triangle, 485-86; and Bell, Terror Out of Zion, 340.On Shamir,see Avishai Margalit, "The Violent Life of Yitzhak Shamir," New York Review of Books,May 14,1992. Shamir also said that his "proudest achievement" was "when, thanks to ourefforts, wewere able to fully unite all the underground groups fighting for the liberation ofIsrael." See"Shamir: Lifetime of Activism."120. Barzilai, "Brief History."

121. "Palestinian Authority," New Republic editorial, February 18, 2002, 7.122. The most objective accounts of what happened at Camp David and in the subsequentsixmonths include Charles Enderlin, Shattered Dreams: The Failure of the Peace Processin theMiddle East, 1995-2002, trans. Susan Fairfield (NewYork: Other Press, 2003); JeremyPressman, "Visions in Collision: What Happened at Camp David and Taba?"InternationalSecurity 28, no. 2 (Fall 2003); Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba"; Jerome Slater, "WhatWent

NOTES TO PAGES 104-105 391Wrong? The Collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," Political ScienceQuarterly116, no. 2 (July 2001); Deborah Sontag, "Quest for Mideast Peace: How and Why ItFailed," New York Times, July 26, 2001 ; and Swisher, Truth About Camp David.123. The figures in this paragraph and the next one are drawn from Pressman, "Visionsin Collision,"16-18. Barak's offer also included a 1 percent land swap outside the West Bank, sosome commentators describe his offer as being 92 percent rather than 91 percent.124. The original territory assigned to Britain in the treaties that ended World WarI included theeast and west banks of the Jordan River. But in 1922, Britain created Transjordan(whichlater became Jordan) on the east bank. Henceforth, the British Mandate in Palestineincludedthe territory that today comprises Israel, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. Whenwe refer to Mandate Palestine, we mean the post-1922 territories, of which Israelmakes up78 percent and the Occupied Territories 22 percent.125. Describing a lengthy interview with Ehud Barak about what happened at CampDavid,Benny Morris writes: "But in the West Bank, Barak says, the Palestinians werepromised acontinuous piece of sovereign territory except for a razor-thin Israeli wedge runningfrom Jerusalemthrough from Maale Adumim to the Jordan River." Benny Morris, "Camp David andAfter: An Exchange (1. An Interview with Ehud Barak)," New York Review of Books,June 13,2002, 44. Also see the map in Pundak, "From Oslo to Taba," 46. For the Palestinianversionof what the map looked like, see Orient House (Jerusalem), "Israel's Concessions,"LeMonde Diplomatique, December 2000; and the map titled "Palestinian Characterizationofthe Final Proposal at Camp David," in Dennis Ross, The Missing Peace: The InsideStory ofthe Fight for Middle East Peace (NewYork: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004). Contrarytoboth Barak and the Palestinians, Ross claims that the final map at Camp David gavethePalestinians control over a continuous piece of territory in the West Bank. See "MapReflectingActual Proposal at Camp David," ibid. Ross's assertion is not plausible, however, aseven Barak admits that an Israeli-controlled road connecting Jerusalem with theJordanRiver Valley would have bisected the West Bank. As long as Israel controlled

thatstrategicallyimportant valley, it would need to be able to reach it with at least onewell-defendedconnector road. Whereas Barak envisioned one connector road running eastward fromJerusalem,the Palestinians apparently envisioned a second one running eastward from the Arielsettlement to the Jordan River Valley. One might argue that the Israelis wouldeventuallyabandon those connector roads when they surrendered the Jordan River Valley. Asnoted,however, there was no guarantee that the Israelis would ever leave that valley, andeven if theydid, there was no guarantee that they would abandon the connector roads. The main

reasonfor this continuing confusion about what the final map at Camp David looked like isthat noofficial map was ever drawn up and, "at Barak's insistence, no written records werekept."Jerome Slater, "The Missing Pieces in the Missing Peace," Tikkun.org, May/fune 2005.126. Pressman, "Visions in Collision," 18.127. Enderlin, Shattered Dreams, 243-51 ; Slater, "What Went Wrong?"; and Sontag,"Quest forMideast Peace."128. Quoted in "Norman Finkelstein & Former Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-AmiDebate:Complete Transcript," Democracy Now! radio and TV broadcast, February 14, 2006.129. There is no evidence that Arafat started the First Intifada either. See Morris,Righteous Victims,561. "The main energizing force of the Intifada," Morris writes, "was the frustrationofthe national aspirations of the 650,000 inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, 900,000 of theWestBank, and 130,000 of East Jerusalem, who wanted to live in a Palestinian state andnot asstateless inhabitants under a brutal, foreign military occupation." Ibid., 562.130. Enderlin, Shattered Dreams, 284-85 .131. Quoted in Jeremy Pressman, "The Second Intifada: Background and Causes of theIsraeli-Palestinian Conflict," Journal of Conflict Studies 22, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 116. Alsosee YezidSayigh, "Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt," Survival 43, no. 3 (Autumn 2001);HenrySiegman, "Partners for War," New York Review of Books, January 16, 2003, 24; HenrySiegman,

"Sharon and the Future of Palestine," New York Review of Books, December 2, 2004, 12;andSlater, "Missing Pieces."132. Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, Final Report, April 30, 2001, 7.133. Ibid., 5.134. Ian S. Lustick, "Through Blood and Fire Shall Peace Arise," Tikkun.org, May/ June2002;Pressman, "The Second Intifada"; Mouin Rabbani, "A Smorgasbord of Failure: Oslo andtheAl-Aqsa Intifada," in The New Intifada: Resisting Israel's Apartheid, ed. Roane Carey(London:Verso, 2001), 69-89 ; Sara Roy, "Why Peace Failed: An Oslo Autopsy," Current History101, no. 651 (January 2002); and Sara Roy, "Ending the Palestinian Economy," MiddleEastPolicy 9, no. 4 (December 2002).135. Ben-Ami, Scars of War, 264.136. Roy, "Why Peace Failed," 9.137. Ron Dudai, "Trigger Happy: Unjustified Shooting and Violation of the Open-FireRegulationsDuring the al-Aqsa Intifada," B'Tselem draft report, March 2002.138. Yasser Arafat, "The Palestinian Vision of Peace," New York Times, February 3,2002; YasserArafat, text of press conference, Geneva, December 14, 1988, in Journal of PalestineStudies18, no. 3 (Spring 1989): 180-81; "Palestinians Affirm Israel's Right to Exist,"CNN.com,December 14, 1998; Pressman, "Visions in Collision," 24-27; Yezid Sayigh, ArmedStruggleand the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949—1993

(New York:OxfordUniversity Press, 1997); and Jerome M. Segal, Creating the Palestinian State: AStrategy forPeace (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989), chap. 1. One might argue that Arafat'scommitmentto the right of return for the Palestinians reveals that he was still bent ondestroyingIsrael. But Arafat surely recognized that Israeli leaders would never agree to a

peacesettlement that would allow large numbers of Palestinians to move back into Israel.At thesame time, however, it made good sense for Arafat not to soften his position on rightof returnbefore the negotiations, so that he could use this issue as a bargaining chip. Notsurprisingly,there is considerable evidence that Palestinian leaders (including Arafat before hedied) recognize that they will have to make major concessions on this important issueto geta final agreement. See Akiva Eldar and David Landau, "Arafat: Israel Is Jewish; Won'tCiteFigure on Refugees," Haaretz, June 18, 2004; Associated Press, "PA Minister Shaath:Palestinian Right of Return Is Negotiable," Haaretz, August 20, 2003; Pressman,"Visions inCollision," 28-33 ; and M. J. Rosenberg, "Intractable Issue?" Weekly Opinion Column,Issue#144, Israel Policy Forum, Washington, DC, July 18, 2003.139. Akiva Eldar, "Popular Misconceptions," Haaretz, June 11, 2004; Akiva Eldar,"While TheyWere Sleeping," Haaretz, September 17, 2001; Danny Rubenstein, "The Stronger SideCreatesReality," Haaretz, June 16, 2004; and Emmanuel Sivan, "What the General Is Allowed,"Haaretz, June 14, 2004.140. Pressman, "Visions in Collision," 25.141. "Official Palestinian Response to the Clinton Parameters (and letter tointernational community),"January 1, 2001, www.robat.scl.net/content/NAD/negotiations/clinton_parameters/param2.php.142. "Excerpts: White House Spokesman on Clinton-Arafat Talks," issued by PressSection, U.S.embassy in Israel, January 3, 2001 ; Transcript of "Clinton Speech on Mideast PeaceParameters(January 7, 2001)," Office of the White House Press Secretary, January 8, 2001; andEnderlin, Shattered Dreams, 344. Also see Akiva Eldar, "The Battle for PublicOpinion,"Haaretz, June 24, 2002, and Pressman, "Visions in Collision," 20, both of which makeclearthat Israel also had serious reservations about the Clinton parameters.143. Sontag, "Quest for Mideast Peace"; and Enderlin, Shattered Dreams, 349-50 .144. Jeff Jacoby, "America Takes Side of Israel," Boston Globe, March 26, 2006. Blockis quotedin Tony Czuczka, "Under Fire, Israel Lobby Rallies US Backers," EUX.TV: The EuropeChannel (online), March 10, 2007. Also see Mart, Eye on Israel; and Martin Peretz,"Oil andVinegar: Surveying the Israel Lobby," New Republic, April 10, 2006.145. According to the historian Michelle Mart, during the Cold War "Israelis became'American

ized,'" and this transformation was due in good part to a sense of "Judeo-Christianunity." "TheCultural Foundations of the US/Israel Alliance," Tikkun.org, November 11, 2006.

146. Jodie T. Allen and Alec Tyson, "The U.S. Public's Pro-Israel History," PewResearch Center,July 19, 2006; "Americans' Support for Israel Unchanged by Recent Hostilities," PewResearchCenter press release, July 26, 2006; and Robert Ruby, "A Six-Day War: Its Aftermathin American Public Opinion," Pew Research Center, May 30, 2007.147. Allen and Tyson, "The U.S. Public's Pro-Israel History"; Pew Research Center forthe Peopleand the Press in Association with the Council on Foreign Relations, "America's Placeinthe World 2005: An Investigation of the Attitudes of American Opinion Leaders andtheAmerican Public About International Affairs," November 2005, 11—12.148. "Conspiracy Theories and Criticism of Israel in Aftermath of Sept. 11 Attacks,"

Anti-Defamation League press release, November 1, 2001.149. Steven Kull (principal investigator), "Americans on the Middle East Road Map"(Programon International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, May 30, 2003), 9-11,18-19.150. "American Attitudes Toward Israel and the Middle East," survey conducted onMarch 18-25,2005, and June 19-23, 2005, by the Marttila Communications Group for the Anti-Defamation League.151. Andrew Kohut, "American Views of the Mideast Conflict," New York Times, May 14,2002.152. On Israeli responsibility for the second Lebanon war, see the ABCNews —Washington Postpoll conducted on August 3-6, 2006, and the CBS News-New York Times poll conductedonJuly 21-25, 2006, both of which can be found in "Israel, the Palestinians,"PollingReport.com.Regarding the United States not taking sides, see the USA Today-Gallup poll, ibid.;and theZogby poll taken August 11-15, 2006, the results of which are described in "ZogbyPoll: U.S.Should Be Neutral in Lebanon War," Zogby International press release, August 17,2006.4: WHAT IS THE "ISRAEL LOBBY"?1. Andrew C. Revkin, "Bush Aide Edited Climate Reports," New York Times, June 8,2005; andAndrew C. Revkin and Matthew Wald, "Material Shows Weakening of Climate Reports inHundreds of Instances," New York Times, March 20, 2007.2. Important works on ethnic lobbies and their impact on foreign policy include TonySmith,Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American ForeignPolicy(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy,2nded., ed. A. A. Said (NewYork: Praeger, \98\);Ethnic Groupsand U.S. Foreign Policy,ed. M. E.Ahrari (NewYork: Greenwood Press, 1987); Paul Watanabe, Ethnic Groups, Congress, andAmerican Foreign Policy: The Politics of the Turkish Arms Embargo (Westport, CT:GreenwoodPress, 1984); and R. Hrair Dekmejian and Angelos Themelis, "Ethnic Lobbies in U.S.Foreign Policy: A Comparative Analysis of the Jewish, Greek, Armenian and TurkishLobbies,"Occasional Research Paper no. 13, Institute of International Relations, PanteionUniversityof Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece, October 1997.

3. This is a common problem in political analysis. For example, the concepts of"liberal" and"conservative" are well understood and uncontroversial, and it is easy to think ofexemplarsof each type (for instance, Senator Ted Kennedy for "liberal" and former CongressmanNewtGingrich for "conservative"). There are, however, individuals who are harder toclassify, suchas Senator Joseph Lieberman or the late Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, both of whomwere liberal on domestic issues but conservative on foreign policy issues.4. Melvin I. Urofsky, American Zionism from Herd to the

Holocaust (Garden City, NY:AnchorPress, 1975), 1; and Steven T. Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism: American Jews,Zionism, and Israel," in The Cambridge Companion to American Judaism, ed. Dana EvanKaplan (NewYork: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 209.5. Robert H. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," inSaid, Ethnicityand U.S. Foreign Policy, 121-22.6. Steven M. Cohen, The 2004 National Survey of American Jews, sponsored by theJewish

Agency for Israel's Department of Jewish-Zionist Education, February 24, 2005. Also

see2006 Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion, conducted September 25-October 16,2006, American Jewish Committee, October 18, 2006; Steven M. Cohen, "Poll:Attachmentof U.S. Jews to Israel Falls in Past 2 Years," Forward, March 4, 2005; and M. J.Rosenberg,"Letting Israel Sell Itself," Weekly Opinion Column, Issue #218, Israel Policy Forum,Washington,DC, March 18, 2005. A recent report prepared for the American Jewish Committeenotes that "there is a consensus among several studies that Israel is not central toyoungpeople's Jewish identity." Jacob B. Ukeles et al., "Young Jewish Adults in the UnitedStatesToday," American Jewish Committee, September 2006, 34. Also see Amiram Barkat,"YoungAmerican Jews Are More Ambivalent Toward Israel, Study Shows," Haaretz, March 7,2005.

7. As the Joint Program Plan of the National Jewish Community Relations AdvisoryCouncil(NJCRAC), a major Jewish agency, put it in 1957, "The American public accepted theAmerican Jewish concern about Israel .. . as a natural, normal manifestation ofinterestbased on sympathies and emotional attachments of a sort that are common to manyAmericans."Quoted in Jack Wertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life in the United States Since1945," American Jewish Yearbook 1995 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1995),13.8. Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism," 211; and Thomas A. Kolsky, Jews AgainstZionism:The American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press,1990).9. The shift is nicely captured by the evolving position of the Central Conference ofAmericanRabbis (CCAR), the rabbinical body of Reform Judaism. In 1897, CCAR declared that"wetotally disapprove of any attempt for the establishment of a Jewish state. Suchattemptsshow a misunderstanding of Israel's mission," and it did not endorse the BalfourDeclarationin 1917. In 1967, by contrast, CCAR declared "its solidarity with the State andPeople of Israel.Their triumphs are our triumphs. Their ordeal is our ordeal. Their fate is ourfate."Quoted in Chaim I. Waxman, "All in the Family: American Jewish Attachments toIsrael,"in A New Jewry? America Since the Second World War, Studies in Contemporary Jewry:AnAnnual, Vol. VIII, ed. Peter Y. Medding (New York: Oxford University Press for theInstituteof Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University, 1992), 140.10. Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism," 212.11. Waxman, "All in the Family," 134. To note one example, the first item listed onthe AmericanJewish Congress's statement of its core agenda is the "safety and security of Israelandthe world Jewish community," www.ajcongress.org/site/ PageServer?pagename=about. Thesituation is similar today; there are more than ninety separate groups identified as"Israelrelated"in the

2005 edition of the yearbook.12. "Who We Are" and "What We Do," Conference of Presidents website, www.conferenceofpresidents.org/content.asp?id=52. The Conference of Presidents was created in 1954inresponse to Assistant Secretary of State Henry Byroade's complaint that it wasdifficult forhim to deal with the many separate Jewish organizations and it would be useful iftheywould speak with one voice. See Edward Tivnan, The Lobby: Jewish Political Power andAmerican Foreign Policy (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 40-41.13. This figure omits personal contributions and thus understates the role ofpro-Israel campaign

contributions. See www.crp.org/pacs/industry.asp?txt=Q058ccycle=2006. On the generalphenomenon of "stealth PACs," see Richard H. Curtiss, Stealth PACs: LobbyingCongress for Control of U.S. Middle East Policy, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: AmericanEducationalTrust, 1996).14. Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "Washington's Power 25," Fortune, December 8, 1997. AIPACwasranked number four in a similar study conducted in 2001. See Jeffrey H. Birnbaum andRussell Newell, "Fat and Happy in D.C.," Fortune, May 28, 2001.15. Richard E. Cohen and Peter Bell, "Congressional Insiders Poll," National Journal,March 5,2005; and James D. Besser, "Most Muscle? It's NRA, Then AIPAC and AARP," ChicagoJewish Star, March 11-24, 2005.16. Dymally is quoted in Robert Pear with Richard L. Berke, "Pro-Israel Group ExertsQuietMight as It Rallies Supporters in Congress," New York Times, July 7, 1987; Hamiltonis

quoted in George D. Moffett III, "Israeli Lobby Virtually Unmatched," ChristianScienceMonitor, June 28, 1991.

17. On the role played by Brandeis, Wise, and others, see Irvine Anderson, BiblicalInterpretationand Middle East Policy: The Promised Land, America and Israel, 1917-2002(Gainesville: UniversityPress of Florida, 2005), 61-62; and Peter Grose, Israel in the Mind of America (NewYork: Knopf, 1983), 67-71. Truman's former business partner Eddie Jacobson convincedhim to meet with Chaim Weizmann in 1948, and pro-Zionist advisers such as DavidNilesand Clark Clifford helped convince Truman to support the 1947 partition plan and torecognizethe new state in 1948. For different views on the various influences that shapedTruman'sdecisions, see Peter L. Hahn, Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward theArab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1961 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,2006),26—31 and chaps. 2-3; Zvi Ganin, Truman, American Jewry, and Israel, 1945—1948 (NewYork: Holmes and Meier, 1979); Steven L. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israel Conflict:MakingAmerica's Middle East Policy from Truman to Reagan (Chicago: University of ChicagoPress,1985), chap. 2; Kenneth Ray Bain, The March to Zion: United States Policy and theFoundingof Israel (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1979); and Warren Bass, Support AnyFriend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U .S.-Israeli Alliance (NewYork:OxfordUniversity Press, 2003), 23-34.18. Lloyd Grove, "The Men with Muscle: The AIPAC Leaders, Battling for Israel andAmongThemselves," Washington Post, June 14, 1991.19. J. J. Goldberg, Jewish Power: Inside the American

Jewish Establishment (NewYork:BasicBooks, 1996), 158.20. Stuart Eizenstat, "Loving Israel, Warts and All," Foreign Policy 81 (Winter1990-91): 92.21. Ibid.; and Melvin I. Urofsky, We Are One! American Jewry and Israel (Garden City,NY:Doubleday, 1978).22. As Jack Wertheimer puts it, "There is little doubt that the preoccupations andmood of theorganized Jewish community underwent profound changes in the wake of the Six DayWar . . . American Jewry fully identified with Israel, an identification thatgalvanized thecommunity to unprecedented amounts of philanthropic giving and volunteering." See"JewishOrganizational Life," 32; and Menahem Kaufman, "Envisaging Israel: The Case of theUnited Jewish Appeal," in Envisioning Israel: The Changing Ideals and Images of NorthAmerican

Jews, ed. Allon Gal (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1996), 232—34.23. Wertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life," 32-33.24. Ibid., 55.25. Quoted in Wolf Blitzer, "The AIPAC Formula," Moment, November 1981, 23.26. AIPAC does not disclose its annual budget; the numbers reported here are fromBlitzer,"AIPAC Formula," 23; Lloyd Grove, "On the March for Israel; The Lobbyists fromAIPAC,Girding for Battle in the New World Order," Washington Post, June 13, 1991; JeffreyH.Birnbaum, "Pro-Israel Lobby Holds Meeting Amid Worries," Washington Post, May 19,2005; Thomas B. Edsall and Molly Moore, "Pro-Israel Lobby Has Strong Voice,"WashingtonPost, September 5, 2004; and James Petras, "AIPAC on Trial," CounterPunch.org,January7-8, 2006.27. Quoted in Goldberg, Jewish Power, 223.28. Bass, Support Any Friend, 147. Also see Goldberg, Jewish Power, 197-203.29. Goldberg, "Old Friend, Shattered Dreams," Forward, December 24, 2004; EstherKaplan,"The Jewish Divide on Israel," Nation, July 12, 2004; Michael Massing, "ConservativeJewishGroups Have Clout," Los Angeles Times, March 10, 2002; Eric Yoffie, "Reform theConference,"Forward, August 2, 2002; and William Fisher, "U.S. Jewish Groups Press MideastPeace," Antiwar.com, November 25, 2004.30. Daniel Levy, "Is It Good for the Jews?" American Prospect, July 5, 2006.31. Quoted in Sharon Samber, "Congress Urged Not to Link Israel Aid to ChinaArms,"JTA.org,June 13, 2000.32. See, for example, Americans for Peace Now, "Briefing for the 110th Congress:Securing Israel's

Future Through Peace," 8, www.donteverstop.com/files/apn/upl/assets/APN110thBBook.pdf.

33. According to the IPF website, "Israel Policy Forum believes that through atwo-state solutionto the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as theregion asa whole, will become more secure, prosperous and stable." See www.ipforum.org/display.cfm?id=l.34. Jewish Voice for Peace, "U.S. Military Aid to Israel,"www.jewishvoiceforpeace/org/publish/printer_17.shtml.35. Quoted in Tivnan, The Lobby, 93.36. Quoted in Goldberg, Jewish Power, 206.37. Ori Nir, "FBI Probe: More Questions Than Answers," Forward, May 13, 2005;Bookbinderis quoted in Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem: A Reporters Notebook(NewYork: Oxford University Press, 1985), 148.38. On these incidents, see Hahn, Caught in the Middle East, 39-42, 46-51, 57-59,79-82.39. These activities (and the quoted Israeli communications) are described in TomSegev, 1967:Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East,

trans. Jessica Cohen(NewYork: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 254, 264-65, 304-305.40. Quoted in David Landau, "The Battle for Washington," Haaretz, March 28, 2003.41. Jonathan Marcus, "Discordant Voices: The U.S. Jewish Community and Israel Duringthe1980s," International Affairs 66, no. 3 (July 1990): 546. Also see Sarah Bronson,"OrthodoxLeader: U.S. Jews Have No Right to Criticize Israel," Haaretz, August 2, 2004; andDanielBen Simon, "Storm Warnings," Haaretz, November 14, 2003.42. Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism," 214; Bookbinder is quoted in Blitzer,Between

Washington and Jerusalem, 147-48. Writing in the 1980s, the historian David Bialeobserved,"The ideological hegemony that Zionism achieved in the organized Jewish communityin the last two decades has had the effect of stilling debate about many of thespecificpolicies of the Israeli government." Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History (NewYork:Schocken Books, 1986), 189.43. 2004 Survey of American Jewish Opinion, conducted August 18-September 1, 2004,AmericanJewish Committee, September 21, 2004, question 16. Earlier surveys produced nearlyidentical results.44. This account of Breira's brief history is based on Michael E. Staub, Torn at theRoots: TheCrisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America (New York: Columbia University Press,2002),chap. 8; Tivnan, The Lobby, 90-96; Wertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life," 39-43;andGoldberg, Jewish Power, 207-208.45. Goldberg, Jewish Power, 208.46. Tivnan, The Lobby, 76. David Biale offered a similar view in 1986, writing, "Forthe organizedJewish community, lack of support for Israel is tantamount to treason . . . Israel istheone issue over which lack of belief is treated as heresy." Power and Powerlessness,188.47. American Jewish leaders were openly upset when Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamirbrieflybacked a proposal to amend the Law of Return to require conversions to Judaism beconductedby Orthodox rabbis according to halakha (rabbinical law). As Rabbi Eric Yoffie oftheAmerican Reform movement put it, "If Reform rabbis in Israel are not rabbis and theirconversionsare not conversions, that means our Judaism is not Judaism, and that we aresecondclassJews." Quoted in Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism," 218. Also see Goldberg,Jewish Power, 337-42.48. Lawrence Grossman, "Jewish Communal Affairs," American Jewish Yearbook 1998 (NewYork: American Jewish Committee, 1998), 110-11 ; Tom Tugend, "Talk by N.Y Times'FriedmanSpurs ADL-ZOA Political Fuss," JTA.org, December 6, 1996; and Tom Tugend, "N.Y.Times Columnist Applauds ADL for Not Caving in to ZO A, "JTA. org, December 13,1996.49. Inigo Gilmore, "U.S. Jewish Leader Hit over Letter," Sunday Telegraph (London),August 12,2003; and Isi Liebler, "An Open Letter to Edgar Bronfman," Jerusalem Post, August 6,2003.50. These quotations are from Isi Liebler, "When Seymour Met Condi," Jerusalem Post,November

24, 2005; Ori Nir, "O.U. Chief Decries American Pressure on Israel," Forward,December 2,2005; Ori Nir, "Rice Trip Raises Concern over U.S. Pressure on Israel," Forward,November 18,2005; and Seymour D. Reich, "Listen to America," Jerusalem Post, November 13, 2005.

51. The author of the Americans for a Safe Israel pamphlet attacking Breira, RaelJean Isaac,wrote a similar polemic against New Jewish Agenda, and the head of the ZOAsWashingtonchapter denounced the same group as "pro-Arab rather than pro-Israel." Hampered byrecurringbudget deficits and other challenges, New Jewish Agenda folded in 1992, aftertwelve years of tenuous existence. See Jack Wertheimer, "Breaking the Taboo: Criticsof Israeland the American Jewish Establishment," in Gal, Envisioning Israel, 410-11; andEmilyNepon, "New Jewish Agenda: The History of an Organization, 1980-1992" (B.A. thesis,

Goddard College, 2006), available at www.newjewishagenda.org.52. The material in this paragraph is based on Kaplan, "Jewish Divide on Israel." Intwo othersimilar incidents, the Hillel program directors at the University of California atSanta Cruzand Ithaca College reportedly resigned after being reprimanded for publishingarticles supportingIsraeli and Palestinian opposition to the occupation.53. Ari Paul, "Zionist vs. Zionist," American Prospect, January 4, 2007; RebeccaSpence, "CampusCoalition Split over Progressive Union," Forward, January 19, 2007; Rebecca Spence,"GroupsFlip Flop as Controversy over Liberal Zionists Continues," Forward, February 2, 2007;BenHarris, "Group That Criticized Israel to Stay in Campus Coalition DespiteProtests,"JTA.org,January 24, 2007; "L.A. Israeli Consul General to Foreign Ministry: UPZ and Breakingthe SilencePrograms Harm Israel's Image and Must Be Stopped," Zionist Organization of Americapress release, January 31, 2007, www.zoa.org/2007/01/la_israeli_cons.htm.54. When asked, "In the current situation, do you favor or oppose the establishmentof a Palestinianstate?" the percentage of American Jews responding "in favor" was 54 percent in2006, 56 percent in 2005, and 57 percent in 2004. "Annual Survey of American JewishOpinion," 2006, 2005, and 2004, available at www.ajc.org.55. Goldberg, Jewish Power, 161.56. Ibid., 217. Also see 159-62, 170-75, 216-23. Also see Eric Alterman, "AIPAC RunsRight,"Nation, October 10, 2006; Goldberg, "Old Friends"; Massing, "Conservative JewishGroups"; Rosenthal, "Long Distance Nationalism," 217; and Mark Seal, "Sitting on theSidelines," Haaretz, December 24, 2004.57. In particular, Hoenlein served for a number of years as chairman of an annualdinner to raisefunds to support Bet El, a militant Israeli settlement near Ramallah. See MichaelMassing,"Deal Breakers," American Prospect, March 11, 2002; and Michael Massing, "The IsraelLobby," Nation, June 10, 2002.58. Massing, "Deal Breakers." J. J. Goldberg offers a similar analysis, writing that"under [Tom]Dine, the ruling executive committee tripled in size. Formerly, the committee hadbeen controlledby the heads of the New York-based national Jewish organizations. Now the Jewishcommunity leaders were a minority, outnumbered by AIPAC's own contributors. Swellingthe executive committee . . . removed the lobby from the national Jewish communalstructure,such as it was, and placed it firmly in the hands of a few big donors whose onlyloyaltywas to AIPAC." Jewish Power, 201.59. Michael Massing, "The Storm over the Israel Lobby," New York Review of Books,June 8,2006; and Matthew Dorf, "After Barak Win, AIPAC Reverses Opposition to a PalestinianState," JTA.org, May 28, 1999.60. This episode is recounted

in Goldberg, Jewish Power, 54—57.61. Massing, "Deal Breakers"; and Levy, "Is It Good for the Jews?"62. Peter Beinart and Hanna Rosin, "AIPAC Unpacked," New Republic, September 20,1993,20-23; and Goldberg, Jewish Power, 225-26.63. Waxman, "All in the Family," 143-44.64. Jonathan Woocher, "The Geo-Politics of the American Jewish Community," JerusalemLetter/Viewpoints (online), Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, January 15, 1992,3.65. Thomas L. Friedman, "Foreign Affairs: Mischief Makers," New York Times, April 5,1995.

66. As Massing points out, the Israel Policy Forum has "managed to forge close tieswith manyinfluential members of Congress, but lacking a formal membership and strongfundraisingapparatus, it cannot match the influence of AIPAC and the Conference." Massing,

"DealBreakers."67. Among the best works on neoconservatism are Gary Dorrien, The NeoconservativeMind:Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology (Philadelphia: Temple University Press,1993);Gary Dorrien, Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana (New York:Routledge, 2004); John Ehrman, The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and ForeignAffairs,1945-1994 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Murray Friedman, TheNeoconservativeRevolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy (New York:Cambridge University Press, 2005); Francis Fukuyama, America at the Crossroads:Democracy,Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006);Mark Gerson, The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold Wars to the Culture Wars(Lanham,MD: Madison Books, 1996); Goldberg, Jewish Power, 159-61; Stefan Halper andJonathan Clarke, America Alone: The Neoconservatives and the Global Order (New York:Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Irving Kristol, Neoconservatism: TheAutobiographyof an Idea (NewYork: Free Press, 1995).

68. For an overview of neoconservative thinking about U.S. foreign policy, see JohnJ.Mearsheimer, "Hans Morgenthau and the Iraq War: Realism Versus Neo-Conservatism,"posted May 19, 2005, opendemocracy.com. An illustrative collection ofneoconservativewritings on foreign policy is Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in AmericanForeign andDefense Policy, ed. William Kristol and Robert Kagan (San Francisco: EncounterBooks,2000); a perceptive portrait of the neoconservatives and their views on foreignpolicy is IanLustick, Trapped in the War on Terror (Philadelphia: University of PennsylvaniaPress,2006), chap. 4.69. For a typical neoconservative statement about multilateralism and institutions,see CharlesKrauthammer, "Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World,"2004 Irving Kristol Lecture, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, February10,2004, 3. The neoconservative view of Europe is exemplified by Robert Kagan, OfParadiseand Power: America and Europe in the New World Order (NewYork: Knopf, 2003).70. For a discussion of bandwagoning, see Stephen M. Walt, The Origins of Alliances(Ithaca,NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).71. Max Boot, "What the Heck Is a 'Neocon'?" Wall Street Journal, December 30, 2002;andMax Boot, "Think Again: Neocons," Foreign Policy 140 (January-February 2004), 22.Alsosee Don Atapattu, "Interview with Middle East Scholar Avi Shlaim," Nation, June 16,2004;Halper and Clarke, America Alone, 41, 58-60, 82, 167-68; Irving Kristol, "ThePoliticalDilemma of American Jews," Commentary, July 1984,

23-29; and Jim Lobe, "EnergizedNeocons Say Israel's Fight Is Washington's," Antiwar.com, July 18, 2006.72. Benjamin Ginsberg, The Fatal Embrace: Jews and the State (Chicago: University ofChicagoPress, 1993), 231.73. "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," prepared by the Institutefor AdvancedStrategic and Political Studies, 1996, www.iasps.org/stratl.htm. The study groupthat produced this report was chaired by Richard Perle, and its other members wereJamesColbert, Charles Fairbanks Jr., Douglas Feith, Robert Loewenberg, Jonathan Torop,DavidWurmser, and Meyrav Wurmser.74. Quoted in Dorrien, Neoconservative Mind, 344. Also see ibid., 343-45; Ginsberg,Fatal Embrace,

231-36; and John B. Judis, "The Conservative Wars," New Republic, August 11 and18, 1986.75. Patrick J. Buchanan, "Whose War?" American Conservative, March 24, 2003; andPaulCraig Roberts, "Neocon Treason," Antiwar.com, August 24, 2004.76. Friedman, Neoconservative Revolution, i. Gal Beckerman noted that "acknowledgingthe Jewishnessof neoconservatism has always triggered the red, flashing lights of anti-Semitism . ..But there is some truth to the suspicion. If there is an intellectual movement inAmerica to

whose invention Jews can lay sole claim, neoconservatism is it." See "TheNeoconservativePersuasion," Forward, January 6, 2006.

77. Max Blumenthal, "Born-Agains for Sharon," Salon.com, October 30, 2004; Darrell L.Bock,"Some Christians See a 'Road Map' to End Times," Los Angeles Times, June 18, 2003;Nathan Guttman, "Wiping Out Terror, Bringing on Redemption," Haaretz, April 29,2002;Tom Hamburger and Jim VandeHei, "Chosen People: How Israel Became a Favorite Causeof Christian Right," Wall Street Journal, May 23, 2002; and Paul Nussbaum, "IsraelFindsan Ally in American Evangelicals," Philadelphia Inquirer (online), November 13,2005.78. On how Christian beliefs influenced Balfour, see Anderson, BiblicalInterpretation, 60—62.Some writers suggest that Christian beliefs also influenced Wilson's endorsement oftheBalfour Declaration and Truman's support for Israel's creation, although neither wasa dispensationalist.Ibid., 87-89 ; and Grose, Israel in the Mind of America, 67-71.79. Timothy P. Weber, On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel'sBest Friend(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 188-96.80. Weber, On the Road to Armageddon, 184. As Colin Shindler notes, "The growth oftheChristian Right during the 1970s thus paralleled the growth of the Israeli Right—andbothphenomena had been catalyzed by the Six Day War." See "Likud and the ChristianDispensationalists:A Symbiotic Relationship," Israel Studies 5, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 163.81. As L. Nelson Bell wrote in Christianity Today, "That for the first time in morethan 2,000years Jerusalem is now completely in the hands of the Jews gives a student of theBible athrill and a renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible." Quoted inWeber, Onthe Road to Armageddon, 184.82. Quoted in Jane Lampman, "Mixing Prophecy and Politics," Christian ScienceMonitor, July 7,2004.83. Daniel Pipes, "[Christian Zionism]: Israel's Best Weapon," New York Post(online), July 15,2003; and Michael Freund, "Christian Zionists Key to Continued U.S. Support

forIsrael,"Jewish Press (online), December 27, 2006.84. Hagee quoted in Bill Berkowitz, "Pastor John Hagee Spearheads Christians Unitedfor Israel,"Media Transparency, March 19, 2006, www.mediatransparency.org/story.php?storyID=l16.85. The quoted statements are from the IFCJ website, www.ifcj.org.86. "The Apple of HIS Eye: Why Christians SHOULD Support Israel," John HageeMinistrieswebsite, www.jhm.org/print-Israel.asp; and Andrew Higgins, "A Texas Preacher LeadsCampaignto Let Israel Fight," Wall Street Journal, July 27, 2006.87. "Zion's Christian Soldiers," 60 Minutes, June 8, 2003,

www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/10/03/60minutes/printable524268/shtml.88. Quoted in Lampman, "Mixing Prophecy and Politics."89. Weber, On the Road to Armageddon, 226-27; Brent Boyer, "Arvada Church ChampionsIsraeliCause," Denver Post (online), November 22, 2002; and Danielle Haas, "U.S. ChristiansFind Cause to Aid Israel; Evangelicals Financing Immigrants, Settlements," SanFrancisco Chronicle (online), July 10, 2002.90. Donald Wagner, "For Zion's Sake," Middle East Report Online 223 (Summer 2002):55.91. Quoted in Shindler, "Likud and the Christian Dispensationalists," 175.92. "Robertson: God Punished Sharon," Ynetnews.com, January 6, 2006; "RobertsonSuggestsStroke Is Divine Rebuke," New York Times, January 6, 2006; and "Robertson ApologizestoSharon Family," New York Times, January 13, 2006.93. Quoted in Barbara Slavin, "Don't Give Up 1967 Lands, DeLay Tells Israel Lobby,"USA Today,April 23, 2002.94. Matthews asked Armey to confirm that this was his view and Armey said "yes."Armey laterbacked away from his statement after being criticized for favoring ethnic cleansingof thePalestinians in the West Bank. See Matthew Engel, "Senior Republican Calls on IsraeltoExpel West Bank Arabs," Guardian, May 4, 2002; and "Richard Armey Supports EthnicCleansing of Palestinians," Media Monitors Network, May 2, 2002, www.mediamonitors.net/amrl 15.html.

95. "Peace in the Middle East," floor statement of Senator Inhofe, March 4, 2002,http://inhofe.senate.gov/pressapp/record.cfm?id=183110.96. Shindler, "Likud and the Christian Dispensationalists," 156.97. Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics: Militant Evangelists on the Road to NuclearWar (Westport,CT: Lawrence Hill, 1986), 71-76.98. "Pat Robertson Forms Alliance with Mayor of Jerusalem," Baptist Standard(online), November11, 2002; and "Israel Welcomes Christian Support in Battle for Survival, SharonAid[e]Says," Christian Examiner (online), September 6, 2002.99. Quoted in Weber, On the Road to Armageddon, 214-18.100. Quoted in Norton Mezvinsky, "The Impact of Christian Zionism on the Arab-IsraeliConflict,"NthPosition.com, March 2005.101. Jerry Falwell, "On the Threshold of Armageddon," WorldNetDaily.com, July 22,2006; andSarah Posner, "Lobbying for Armageddon," AlterNet.org, August 3, 2006.102. Hal Lindsey, "Mushrooms over the Middle East," WorldNetDaily.com, January 12,2007;and John Hagee, Jerusalem Countdown: A Warning to the World (Lake Mary, FL:Frontline,2006), 17. Based on his own interpretation of scattered biblical passages, Hagee saysthat astrike on Iran will provoke Russia to lead an Arab

coalition to war against Israel,which willbe abandoned by the United States. God will then intervene to destroy Israel'sinvaders, butthe resulting vacuum will be filled by the Antichrist, "who will be the head of theEuropeanUnion." Under his command, the armies of the West gather in Israel to wage the battleofArmageddon against the "king of the East" (China), at which point Christ reappearstostrike down the Antichrist and restore God's kingdom. Hagee concludes, "The end oftheworld as we know it is rapidly approaching" (113-22).103. Christians United for Israel, "CUFI Membership Weekly Update," December 11,2006,

www.cufima.com/id 10.html.104. Shindler, "Likud and the Dispensationalists," 165-66; and Kristol, "ThePolitical Dilemmaof American Jews."105. Perlmutter is quoted in Weber, On the Road to Armageddon, 232; Foxman's remarksare from"Jews and Evangelicals: Support for Israel Isn't Everything," Time, January 16,2007.106. Quoted in Bill Broadway, "The Evangelical-Israeli Connection: Scripture InspiresManyChristians to Support Zionism Politically, Financially," Washington Post, March 27,2004.107. For Hagee's disturbing attitudes toward Jews, see Jerusalem Countdown, 56-57,109. On hisappearance at the AIPAC Policy Conference, see Gregory Levey, "Inside America'sPowerfulIsrael Lobby," Salon.com, March 16, 2007; "Christians for Israel," Jerusalem Posteditorial,March 14, 2007; and Sarah Posner, "The Goy Who Cried Wolf," American Prospect,March 12, 2007.108. Quoted in James D. Besser, "Hardline Pastor Gets Prime AIPAC Spot," Jewish Week,March 9,2007.109. Naomi M. Cohen, "Dual Loyalties: Zionism and Liberalism," in Gal, EnvisioningIsrael, 326.110. Jo-Ann Mort, "An Unholy Alliance in Support of Israel," Los Angeles Times, May19, 2002.The Alpher and Gorenberg quotations are from "Zion's Christian Soldiers." Also seeGershomGorenberg, The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount(NewYork: Free Press, 2000); and Weber, On the Road to Armageddon, 231.111. Tourism declined after the outbreak of the Second Intifada and September 11 buthas reboundedsince then. The United Nations Statistical Division estimates that Israel received$2.8 billion in tourism receipts in 2004, and Israeli officials report thatapproximately29 percent of these tourists were Christian. See United Nations, World TourismOrganizationStatistical Database and Yearbook 2005 (NewYork: United Nations, 2005); Eric Silver,"Return of the Tourist," Jerusalem Report (online), February 21, 2005; Laurie Copans,"Israel:Tourism Surges as Christian Pilgrims Walk in the Footsteps of Jesus," USA Today,December13, 2004; and William A. Orme, "Fighting in Mideast Blocks Wave of ChristianTourism," New York Times, November 11, 2000.

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112. Anderson, Biblical Interpretation, 103, 138. This is also a central theme ofMichael B.Oren's Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present (NewYork:Norton, 2007), though he overstates its impact on U.S. policy decisions.113. Anderson, Biblical Interpretation, 111,114—15; and Ruth W. Mouly, The ReligiousRight andIsrael: The Politics of Armageddon (Cambridge, MA: Political Research Associates,1985).114. Zev Chafets, "The Rabbi Who Loved Evangelicals (and Vice Versa)," New York

TimesMagazine,July 24, 2005.115. In August 2006, the Vatican's envoy in the Holy Land and the bishops of theEpiscopal,Evangelical Lutheran, and Syrian Orthodox churches in Jerusalem signed a declarationrejectingthe teachings of Christian Zionism and accusing the movement of encouraging"racial exclusivity and perpetual war." See Matthew Tostevin, "Holy Land ChurchesAttackChristian Zionism," Reuters, August 31, 2006. A number of other mainstreamProtestantchurches have been critical of Israeli policy and have seriously considered"selective divestiture"

from companies operating in Israel. The lobby, however, has worked hard to thwartthese efforts and has been largely successful. See James D. Besser, "Church Poised toKillDivestment," Jewish Week, June 23, 2006; Alan Cooperman, "Israel Divestiture SpursClash," Washington Post, September 29, 2004; Michael Conlon, "US PresbyteriansConsiderDivesting over West Bank," Washington Post, February 17, 2005; Laurie Goodstein,"Presbyterians Revise Israel Investing Policy," New York Times, June 22, 2006;NathanGuttman, "A Warning Signal from the Churches," Haaretz, November 26, 2004; ChrisMoore, "Mainline Protestants Challenge Israel Lobby," Antiwar.com, December 7, 2004;Marc Perelman, "Effort Eyed to Combat Divestment," Forward, July 15, 2006; andRachelPomerance, "Episcopal View on Mideast Conflict an Improvement, Jewish Groups Say,"JTA.org, November 9, 2004.

116. The limited financial role of Christian Zionism is illustrated by relativedonations to Israelfollowing the 2006 war in Lebanon. According to Haaretz, Christian groups donatednearly$20 million to reconstruction and resettlement efforts in Israel; by comparison, theUnitedJewish Communities collected more than $340 million. See Daphna Berman, "Christians'Wartime Donations of $20m Went Largely Unheralded," Haaretz, November 3, 2006.117. On the role of interest groups in American politics, see Frank R. Baumgartnerand Beth L.Leech, Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science(Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1998); Richard L. Hall and Frank W. Wayman, "BuyingTime: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees,"American Political Science Review 84, no. 3 (September 1990); John Mark Hansen,GainingAccess: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981 (Chicago: University of ChicagoPress,1991); Ken Kollman, Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Richard A. Smith, "Interest GroupInfluencein the U.S. Congress," Legislative Studies Quarterly 20, no. 1 (February, 1995);David B.Truman, The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion (New York:Knopf,1951); and James Q. Wilson, Political Organizations (New York: Basic Books, 1973).118. Quoted in Mary A. Barberis, "The Arab-Israeli Battle on Capitol Hill," VirginiaQuarterly Review52, no. 2 (Spring 1976): 209.119. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups," 125-26.120. Quoted in Ben Bradlee Jr., "Israel's Lobby," Boston Globe, April 29, 1984.121. Shai Feldman, The Future of U.S.-Israeli Strategic Cooperation (Washington, DC:WashingtonInstitute for Near East Policy, 1996), 5-6.122. Quoted in Grove, "On the March for Israel."123. The Bard and Truman quotations are from Mitchell Bard, "The Israeli and

ArabLobbies,"www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org. Also see Mark N. Katz, "Where Is the Arab Lobby?"MiddleEast Times (online), July 3, 2006; Noam N. Levey, "In Politicians' Pro Israel Din,Arab AmericansGo Unheard," Los Angeles Times, July 23, 2006; Ali A. Mazrui, "Between the Crescentand the Star-Spangled Banner: American Muslims and U.S. Foreign Policy,"International

Affairs 72, no. 3 (July 1996); Nabeel A. Khoury, "The Arab Lobby: Problems andProspects,"Middle East Journal 41, no. 3 (Summer 1987); and Andrea Barron, "Jewish and ArabDiasporasin the United States and Their Impact on U.S. Middle East Policy," in TheArab-IsraeliConflict: Two Decades of Change, ed. Yehuda Lukacs and Abdalla M. Battah (Boulder,CO:

Westview, 1988), 238-59. The weakness of the "Palestinian lobby" in particular iscapturedin Nora Boustany, "Palestinians' Lone Hand in Washington," Washington Post, April19,2002; and George Gedda, "PLO Loses D.C. Office Because of Unpaid Rent," ChicagoTribune,April 12, 2002.

124. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups," 123.125. For a typical example, see Harold Siddiqui, "'Oil Lobby Determined to Have ItsWar' inIraq," Toronto Star (online), January 19, 2003, www.commondreams.org.126. Stephen Zunes, "The Israel Lobby: How Powerful Is It Really?" Foreign Policy inFocus SpecialReport, May 16, 2006; Noam Chomsky, "The Israel Lobby," Znet (online), March 28,2006; and Martin Peretz, "Oil and Vinegar," New Republic, March 30, 2006.127. See especially Craig Unger, House of Bush, House ofSaud: The Secret RelationshipBetweenthe World's Two Most Powerful Dynasties (NewYork: Scribner, 2004). This theme wasalso akey part of Michael Moore's controversial documentary Fahrenheit 9/11.128. In 2006, roughly 40 percent of U.S. crude oil imports came from Canada, Mexico,andVenezuela; Saudi Arabia provided only 14 percent. U.S. Department of Energy,PetroleumSupply Monthly (Washington, DC, February 2007), 58.129. Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. Said to Drop Jordan Arms Sale," New York Times, March21, 1984.130. Quoted in Congressional Quarterly, The Middle East, 68.131. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups," 137-38.132. See www.api.org/policy. Foregn policy discussions are equally scarce on theExxonMobiland British Petroleum websites.133. Quoted in Tivnan, The Lobby, 194.134. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups," 137; and William B. Quandt, "United StatesPolicy inthe Middle East: Constraints and Choices," in Political Dynamics in the Middle East,ed.Paul Hammond and Sidney Alexander (NewYork: Elsevier, 1972), 529-30.135. Danny Fortson, Andrew Murray-Watson, and Tim Webb, "Future of Iraq: The Spoi/sofWar," Independent, January 7, 2007.136. "Cheney Pushed for More Trade with Iran," FOXnews.com, October 9, 2004,www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,134836.00.html.137. Trice, "Domestic Interest Groups," 137-38.138. These quotations are from Roger Hilsman, The Politics of Policy Making inDefense and ForeignAffairs (NewYork: Harper, 1971), 149; Bard, "Israeli and Arab Lobbies"; and"Pro-IsraelLobby on Capitol Hill," BBC Newsnight (online), May 8, 2003,http://news.bbc.co.uk/l/hi/programmes/newsnight/30103 71. stm.139. "In liberal democratic regimes," writes Sheffer, "most notably the UnitedStates, Canada,Australia, Denmark, Holland, and Norway, the Jews were able to maintain open andintensiverelationships with the Jewish community in Palestine and later with Israel . . .Certainsegments in those communities . . .

demonstrated total loyalty to their hostsocieties andgovernments . . . Those who openly identified as supporters of the Zionist movementand ofthe Jewish community in Palestine (the Yishuv) and later of Israel developed dualloyalties.The most resolute Zionists and other supporters of Israel adopted thedivided-loyaltiesstance; that is, in certain respects they were loyal to their host countries, andother respectsto the homeland." Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad (New York: Cambridge UniversityPress, 2003), 232-33.

140. Malcolm Hoenlein, "Crossing the Line of the Acceptable," Haaretz, December 31,2004.141. Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Muslims in Europe: Economic Worries Top ConcernsAboutReligious and Cultural Identity" (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center for the Peopleandthe Press, July 6, 2006), 3.

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142. Quoted in David K. Shipler, "On Middle East Policy, a Major Influence," New YorkTimes,July 6, 1987.143. Quoted in Kurt Eichenwald, "U.S. Jews Split on Washington's Shift on PalestinianState,"New York Times, October 5, 2001.144. David S. Cloud and Helene Cooper, "Israel's Protests Are Said to Stall Gulf ArmsSale,"New York Times, April 5, 2007.145. Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), 203.146. Both quotations are from Goldberg, Jewish Power, 232, 235.147. Eric Alterman, "Can We Talk?" Nation, April 21, 2003.148. Stephen Steinlight, "The Jewish Stake in America's Changing Demography:Reconsideringa Misguided Immigration Policy," Backgrounder, Center for Immigration Studies,Washington,DC, October 2001, 10-11. For an earlier and equally revealing expression of thisview,see Nathan Glazer, "McGovern and the Jews: A Debate," Commentary, September 1972,44.149. Samuel P. Huntington, Who Are We? The Challenges to American National Identity(NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 276-91.150. Quoted in Massing, "Deal Breakers."151. Hagee, "The Apple of HIS Eye"; and Wagner, "For Zion's Sake," 56. Also see LeeUnderwood,"Israel's Right to the Land," January 4, 2004, http://christianactionforisrael.org.right.html.152. Information about Lenny Ben-David is from www.israelunitycoalition.org/sbureau/lbendavid.php.5: GUIDING THE POLICY PROCESS1. Twenty years ago, a senior State Department official told David Shipler of the NewYorkTimes that the lobby "tends to skew the consideration of issues . . . People don'tlook veryhard at some options." Another former Reagan White House official remarked thatwhileAIPAC was "a factor," he knew of "no case where it was decisive, at least in theanalyticalphase." But this official acknowledged that, in Shipler's words, "The greaterinfluenceseemed to be at the political, decision-making level." See David K. Shipler, "OnMiddle EastPolicy, a Major Influence," New York Times, July 6, 1987.2. M.J. Rosenberg, "Kangaroo Congressional Hearing," Weekly Opinion Column, Issue#311,Israel Policy Forum, Washington, DC, February 16, 2007. Also see Michael F. Brown,"Dems' Disdain for Palestine," TomPaine.com, February 20, 2007; and Daniel Levy,'Tikes—Warmonger Daniel Pipes Testifying to Congress—Do They Learn

Nothing?" February 12,2007, www.tpmcafe.com.3. Armey quoted in Jake Tapper, "Questions for Dick Armey: Retiring, Not Shy," NewYorkTimes Magazine, September 1, 2002; Klein quoted in Ron Kampeas, "On Somber Day,DeLay'sSpirits Raised by Pro-Israeli Group's Support," JTA.org, October 2, 2005; and DeLayquoted in James Bennet, "DeLay Says Palestinians Bear Burden for Achieving Peace,"NewYork Times, July 30, 2003.4. After the 2006 congressional elections, 13 out of 100 senators and 30 out of 435representatives

were Jewish, percentages that are significantly higher than the Jewish proportion ofthe U.S. population, which is under 3 percent. Amiram Barkat, "Number of JewishParliamentariansWorldwide Reaches Record High," Haaretz, November 9, 2006.5. Joseph Lieberman, "Speech to the AIPAC National Policy Conference," March 2007,http://lieberman.senate.gov/newsroom/release.cfm?id=270526; Charles Schumer, "ThePeaceProcess Has Been One-Sided" (interview), Middle East Quarterly 7, no. 4 (December2000);Henry Waxman, "Israel Fights for Survival," Beverly Hills Weekly (online), April 19,2002; andRobert Wexler, "Israel and the Middle East,"http://wexler.house.gov/issues.php?ID=19.6. Quoted in Matthew E. Berger, "US Vote May Alter Stance on Middle East," JerusalemPost,November 7, 2006.

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7. Quoted in Janine Zacharia, "Lantos's List," Jerusalem Post, April 13, 2001. Alsosee JeffreyBlankfort, "A Tale of Two Members of Congress and the Capitol Hill Police,"CounterPunch.org, April 17, 2006; and Mark Simon, "Middle East Hits Home in HouseRace," San Francisco Chronicle (online), May 16, 2002.8. Quoted in Mitchell Bard, "Israeli Lobby Power," Midstream 33, no. 1 (January1987): 8.9. For a further analysis of AIPAC's structure and operations, which complements theargumentsoffered here, see Michael Massing, "The Storm over the Israel Lobby," New YorkReviewof Books, June 8, 2006. Also see Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak Out: People andInstitutions Confront Israel's Lobby, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 2003); andMichaelLind, "The Israel Lobby," Prospect 73 (April 2002).10. The Clinton, Gingrich, Reid, and New York Times quotations were accessed fromtheAIPAC website, www.aipac.org/documents/whoweare.html#say, on January 14, 2005. TheNew York Times quotation was still on the site in May 2007; the others have beenremoved.Jeffrey Goldberg, "Real Insiders," New Yorker, July 4, 2005. Gingrich's statement isalsoquoted in Michael Kinsley, "J'accuse, Sort of," Slate.com, March 12, 2003.11. Michael Massing, "Deal Breakers," American Prospect, March 11, 2002; andMassing,"Storm over the Israel Lobby."12. The same article also noted that one in every five AIPAC board members was a topfundraiserfor 2004 presidential candidates John Kerry and George W. Bush. Thomas B. Edsalland Molly Moore, "Pro-Israel Lobby Has Strong Voice," Washington Post, September 5,2004.13. David Biale, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History (NewYork: Schocken Books,1986),186-87.14. Friedman's statement was contained in a letter to AIPAC's members, congratulatingthemon helping maintain

U.S. support for Israel during the 2006 war in Lebanon. It isquoted inJohn Walsh, "AIPAC Congratulates Itself on the Slaughter in Lebanon,"CounterPunch.org,August 16, 2006. This policy has been standard operating procedure for some time. In1987, AIPAC head Tom Dine told supporters that "in the 1985-86 campaign, AIPAC layleaders and staff met with every senator up for re-election except one, plus 49Senate challengersand 205 House challengers, including every new freshman member." Quoted inRobert Pear and Richard L. Berke, "Pro-Israel Group Exerts Quiet Might as It RalliesSupportersin Congress," New York Times, July 7, 1987.15. Hayden also says his willingness to defend Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982was the "mistakeof my political career." Tom Hayden, "Things Come 'Round in Mideast," truthdig.com,July 18, 2006.

16. Harry Lonsdale, personal correspondence with authors, May 16, 2006. Lonsdale alsonotesthat "I was still outspent by Senator Hatfield, and I lost the election," whichconfirms theobvious point that AIPAC does not succeed in every election.17. Evans is quoted in John J. Fialka, "Linked Donations? Political Contributionsfrom Pro-Israel PACs Suggest Coordination," Wall Street Journal, June 24, 1987.18. Goldberg, "Real Insiders."19. Charles R. Babcock, "Papers Link Pro-Israel Lobby to Political Funding Efforts,"WashingtonPost, November 14, 1988; and Fialka, "Political Contributions from Pro-Israel PACs."20. On the FEC's ruling, see John J. Fialka, "Pro-Israel Lobbying Group Is Accused ofBreakingU.S. Campaign-Funds Law," Wall Street Journal, January 13, 1989; and Charles R.Babcock,"FEC Rules Pro-Israel Lobby, PACs Are Not 'Affiliated,'" Washington Post, December22, 1990.21. David D. Newsom, The Public Dimension of Foreign Policy (Bloomington: IndianaUniversityPress, 1996), 187.22. "Pro-Israel Contributions to Federal Candidates, 2005-2006,"www.opensecrets.org/pacs/industry.asp?txt=Q05&cycle=20006.23. Lexington, "Taming Leviathan," Economist, March 15, 2007; see also Kelley BeaucarVlahos,"Pro-Israel Lobby a Force to Be Reckoned With," FOXnews.com, May 28, 2002; Massing,"Deal Breakers"; and Massing, "Storm over the Israel Lobby."

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24. Quoted in Vlahos, "Pro-Israel Lobby."25. These figures include PAC contributions only, not contributions from individuals.Calculatedfrom the Center for Responsive Politics website, www.opensecrets.org.26. Ron Kampeas, "Pro-Israel Political Funds in U.S. Target Friendly Incumbents—andChallengers,"JTA.org, October 3, 2006.27. Janet McMahon, "Record Pro-Israel PAC Contributions Failed to Save SenateMinorityLeader Tom Daschle's Seat," Washington Report on Middle East Affairs (online), July2005.28. Jonathan Allen, "McKinney Opponent Rakes in Pro-Israel Cash," The Hill, August 2,2006,www.hillnews.com. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, McKinney spentroughly $365,000 on her primary campaign, while victor Hank Johnson spent roughly$800,000 on the primary and general election combined. Also see David Firestone, "ANationChallenged: The Lawmaker; Call to Study U.S. Stance on Mideast Draws Anger," NewYork Times, October 18, 2001; Nathan Guttman, "Lobbying for the Pro-IsraelCandidates,"Haaretz, July 7, 2004; "Mideast Fuels 2 Democratic Primaries," Washington Post, June6,2002; and Jonathan Weisman, "House Incumbents McKinney, Schwarz Fall in Primaries,"Washington Post, August 9, 2006.29. Goldberg, "Real Insiders."30. John J. Fialka, "Pro-Israel Politics:

Jewish Groups Increase Campaign Donations,TargetThem Precisely," Wall Street Journal, August 3, 1983; and Richard H. Curtiss, StealthPACs:How Israel's American Lobby Seeks to Control U.S. Middle East Policy, 4th ed.(Washington,DC: American Educational Trust, 1996), 47.31. Goldberg, "Real Insiders. "Also see David M. Halbfinger, "Generational BattleTurns Nastyin Alabama Primary," New York Times, June 3, 2002; Tom Hamburger, "Mideast HauntsAlabama Race," Wall Street Journal, May 31, 2002; "Money from Supporters of IsraelPlayed Role in Alabama Upset," New York Times, June 27, 2002; Juliet Eilperin,"DavisOusts Rep. Hilliard in Alabama Runoff," Washington Post, June 26, 2002; and BenjaminSoskis, "Pro-Israel Lobby Backing Challenger in Alabama Race," Forward, May 10,

2002.32. Quoted in Edward Walsh, "Jewish PACs Flex Muscle: On Hill, Being Viewed asAnti-IsraelCan Be Risky," Washington Post, May 10, 1986; and Curtiss, Stealth PACs, 65-66. Foradditionaldetails on these cases, see Findley, They Dare to Speak Out, chap. 3.33. Adlai Stevenson III, "The Black Book," unpublished book manuscript, undated; andpersonalcorrespondence with authors, March 22, 2007.34. "Californian Spent $1.1 Million on Illinois Race," New York Times, October 10,1985;Richard L. Berke, "Cranston Backer Guilty in Campaign Finance Case," New York Times,May 8, 1990; and Tom Tugend, "Israel Financial Backer Convicted on U.S. Election LawCharges," Jerusalem Post, May 7, 1990.35. Quoted in Edward Tivnan, The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American ForeignPolicy(New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 191. The details in this paragraph are fromibid.,189-91. Also see Charles R. Babcock, "Pro-Israel Political Activists Enforce 'PercyFactor,'"Washington Post, August 7, 1986.36. Quoted in John Diamond and Brianna B. Piec, "Pro-Israel Groups IntensifyPolitical Frontin U.S.," Chicago Tribune, April 16, 2002.37. Lucille Barnes, "Retiring Sen. Jesse Helms Caved to Pro-Israel Lobby HalfwayThrough HisCareer," Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, March 2002, 34; and Tom Hamburgerand Jim VandeHei, "Chosen People: How Israel Became a Favorite Cause of ChristianRight," Wall Street Journal, May 23, 2002.38. Freedman is quoted in Patrick Healy, "Clinton Vows to Back Israel in LatestMideast Conflict,"New York Times, July 18, 2006. Also see Adam Dickter, "Hillary: T Had a Lot toProve,"'Jewish Week, November 18, 2005; Joshua Frank, "Hillary Clinton and theIsraelLobby," Antiwar.com, January 23, 2007; Rachel Z. Friedman, "Senator Israel," NationalReviewOnline, May 25, 2005; Ron Kampeas, "Candidates for 2008 Courting Jewish Support,"Jerusalem Post, January 24, 2007; E. J. Kessler, "Hillary the Favorite in Race forJewish Do

nations," Forward, January 26, 2007; and Kristen Lombardi, "Hillary Calls Israel a'Beacon'of Democracy," Village Voice (online), December 11, 2005.

39. Kessler, "Hillary the Favorite in Race for Jewish Donations"; campaign financedata from theCenter for Responsive Politics, www.opensecrets.org.40. Sometimes AIPAC and other pro-Israel groups just encourage potential foes to keepsilent,as they did with John Sununu during the 2002 New Hampshire Senate race. Sununu hadtwo liabilities: he is of Palestinian and Lebanese descent and some groups in thelobbythought his voting record was less than stellar. The

National Jewish DemocraticCouncil issueda press release saying his record on Israel-related issues "stands out—in a mostunflatteringway," and AIPAC made it clear he was a prime target, dispatching former IsraeliPrimeMinister Benjamin Netanyahu to campaign for Sununu's primary opponent. According totheexecutive director of the Republican Jewish Coalition, Sununu responded with "anencouragingposition paper" that emphasized his commitment to preserving Israel's militarysuperiority.After winning the election, Sununu offered only muted criticisms of Israel's bombingcampaign in Lebanon in the summer of 2006. See National Jewish Democratic Council,"John Sununu: A Singular Voting Record," press release, October 28, 2002; and MatthewE.Berger, "New Republican Congress Retains Pro-Israel Bent," JTA.org, November 8,

2002.For additional background, see Franklin Foer, "Foreign Aid: A Middle East Proxy Warin NewHampshire," New Republic, November 26, 2001; Ralph Z. Hallow, "Pro-Israel LobbyLooksfor Deal with Sununu," Washington Times, September 4, 2002; and Ori Nir, "DespiteHype,Israel Lobby Sits Out Tight New Hampshire Race," Forward, November 8, 2002.41. "A Letter to AIPAC," New York Review of Books, June 8, 2006.42. Quoted in George D. Moffett III, "Israeli Lobby Virtually Unmatched," ChristianScienceMonitor, June 28, 1991.43. Amitay is quoted in Berger, "New Republican Congress"; Carter is quoted inYitzhak Benhorin,"Balanced Stand on ME Is Political Suicide, Says Carter," Ynetnews.com, February 26,2007.44. Richard L. Hall and Alan V. Deardorff, "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy,"American PoliticalScience Review 100, no. 1 (February 2006).45. Quoted in Camille Mansour, Beyond Alliance: Israel in U.S. Foreign Policy, trans.James A.Cohen (NewYork: Columbia University Press, 1994), 242.46. Jonathan Weisman and Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "Senate Passes Ethics Package,"WashingtonPost, January 19, 2007; Nathan Guttman, "Jewish Groups to Challenge Ethics Reform,"Forward, December 1, 2006; Jim Abourezk, "The Hidden Cost of Free CongressionalTripsto Israel," Christian Science Monitor, January 26, 2007; and the AIEF entry at theCenterfor Public Integrity, www.publicintegrity.org.47. Stephen Isaacs, Jews and American Politics (NewYork: Doubleday, 1974), 255-57.48. Quoted in Seth P. Tillman, The United States in the Middle East: Interests andObstacles(Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 67.49. The text of the letter to Rice is fromwww.aipac.org/Publications/SourceMaterialsCongressionalAction/Nelson-Ensign_Letter_FINAL.pdf. Also see Nathan Guttmann,"AIPAC Urges U.S. to End Contacts with Palestinian Authority," Forward, March 14,2007.50. Quoted in Lloyd Grove, "On the March for Israel; The Lobbyists from AIPAC,Girding forBattle in the New World Order," Washington Post, June 13, 1991.51. Although AIPAC has been able to use its political muscle to avoid having toregister as a foreignagent for another government, it is especially concerned about that problem todaybecauseof the Larry Franklin spy scandal, and thus it is going to considerable lengths toemphasize its "American side." See Ron Kampeas, "New Ruling in AIPAC Case RaisesQuestions about 'Foreign Agents,'" JTA.org, August 23, 2006; Ori Nir, "Leaders FearProbeWill Force Pro-Israel Lobby to File as 'Foreign Agent,'" Forward, December 31, 2004;andOri Nir, "Leaders Stress American Side of AIPAC," Forward, May 27, 2005.52. "Sen. Hollings Floor Statement Setting the Record Straight on His MideastNewspaper

Column," May 20, 2004, originally posted on the former senator's website (nowdefunct)but still available at www.shalomctr.org/node/620.

53. Quoted in Grove, "On the March for Israel."54. Sharon's remark was published in an AIPAC advertisement in the Chicago JewishStar, August29-September 11, 2003; Olmert's statement is quoted in "To Israel with Love,"Economist,August 5, 2006.55. Jordan wrote, "Out of 125 members of the Democratic National Finance Council,over 70are Jewish; In 1976, over 60% of the large donors to the Democratic Party were

Jewish; Over60% of the monies raised by Nixon in 1972 was from Jewish contributors; Over 75% ofthemonies raised in Humphrey's 1968 campaign was from Jewish contributors; Over 90% ofthemonies raised by Scoop Jackson in the Democratic primaries was from Jewishcontributors;In spite of the fact that you were a long shot and came from an area of the countrywherethere is a smaller Jewish community, approximately 35% of our primary funds were fromJewishsupporters." Hamilton Jordan, Confidential File, Box 34, File "ForeignPolicy/DomesticPolitics Memo, HJ Memo, 6/77," Atlanta, Carter Library, declassified June 12, 1990.56. Thomas B. Edsall and Alan Cooperman, "GOP Uses Remarks to Court Jews,"WashingtonPost, March 13, 2003. Also see James D. Besser, "Jews' Primary Role Expanding,"JewishWeek, January 23, 2004; Alexander Bolton, "Jewish Defections Irk Democrats," TheHill(online), March 30, 2004; and E. J. Kessler, "Ancient Woes Resurfacing as Dean EyesTopDem Post," Forward, January 28, 2005.57. Isaacs, Jews and American Politics, 115-39; Amy Keller, "Chasing Jewish Dollars:Can GOPNarrow Money Gap in 2004?" Atlanta Jewish Times (online), January 17, 2003; andKessler,"Hillary the Favorite in Race for Jewish Donations."58. Jeffrey S. Helmreich, "The Israel Swing Factor: How the American Jewish VoteInfluencesU.S. Elections,"Jerusalem Letter/Viewpoints (online) 446 (January 15, 2001):1.59. Kampeas, "Candidates for 2008."60. E. J. Kessler, "Lieberman and Dean Spar over Israel," Forward, September 12,2003; andStephen Zunes, "Attacks on Dean Expose Democrats' Shift to the Right," Tikkun.org,November/ December 2003.61. Zunes, "Attacks on Dean"; and James D. Besser, "Dean's Jewish Problem," ChicagoJewishStar, December 19, 2003-January 8, 2004.62. E. J. Kessler, "Dean Plans to Visit Israel, Political Baggage in Tow," Forward,July 8, 2005;and Zunes, "Attacks on Dean."63. A transcript of the Steiner-Katz conversation is available atwww.wrmea.com/backissues/1292/9212013.html. Also see Thomas L. Friedman, "Pro-Israel Lobbyist Quits overAudiotapedBoasts," NewYork Times, November 5, 1992; and "Israeli Lobby President Resignsover Promises; Bragged to Contributor About Lies to Clinton," Washington Times,November4, 1992.64. John Heilprin, "Ex-Deputy Pleads Guilty in Abramoff Case," Boston Globe, March23, 2007;and Stacey Schultz, "Mr. Outside Moves Inside," U.S. News & World Report, March 16,2003.65. Laura Blumenfeld, "Three Peace Suits; For These Passionate American Diplomats, aMiddleEast Settlement Is the Goal of a Lifetime," Washington Post, February 24, 1997; andClayton E. Swisher, The Truth About Camp David: The Untold Story About the Collapseofthe Middle East Peace Process (NewYork: Nation Books, 2004), 35-38, 183-87. In areviewof The Missing Peace, Ross's account

of the failed Middle East peace process, theIsraeli historianAvi Shlaim described the Clinton team as "one of the most ardently pro-Israel"administrationsin U.S. history and said that "it is difficult to think of an American official whois more quintessentially Israel-first in his outlook than Dennis Ross. "Avi Shlaim,"The LostSteps," Nation, August 30, 2004. Also see Michael C. Desch, "The Peace That Failed,"American Conservative, November 8, 2004; and Jerome Slater, "The Missing Pieces in

TheMissing Peace," Tikkun.org, May 2005.66. Samuel Berger, President Clinton's national security adviser, reports that at onepoint dur

ing the negotiations at Camp David (July 2000), Dennis Ross commented, "If Barakoffersanything more, I'll be against this agreement." Unedited transcript of "Comments bySandyBerger at the Launch of How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate (USIP Press, 2005),"U.S. Instituteof Peace, Washington, DC, June 7, 2005, www.usip.org/events/2005/0607_beberger.pdf.

67. Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, "The Tragedy of Errors," New York Review ofBooks, August9, 2001. The Palestinian complaint is quoted in Blumenfeld, "Three Peace Suits."68. David K. Shipler, "On Middle East Policy, a Major Influence," New York Times,July 6, 1987.69. Douglas Brinkley, "The Lives They Lived; Out of the Loop," New York TimesMagazine, December29, 2002.70. Marius, of course, was not an anti-Semite. He merely wrote in the relevantreview: "[Thebook's] account of the brutality of the Shin Bet, the Israeli secret police, iseerily similar tothe stories of the Gestapo, the Geheimstaatspolitzei in Nazi-occupied territories, inWorldWar II." Lloyd Grove, "The Outspoken Speechwriter; Gore Reverses Hiring DecisionAfterReview Critical of Israel," Washington Post, July 19, 1995; and Richard Marius, "AlGoreand Me, or How Marty Peretz Saved Me from Packing My Bags for Washington," JournalofPalestine Studies 25, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 54-59.71. Lawrence Kaplan, "Torpedo Boat: How Bush Turned on Arafat," New Republic,February 18,2002.72. Elliott Abrams, Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in a Christian America (NewYork: Simon& Schuster, 1997), 181.73. Nathan Guttmann, "From Clemency to a Senior Post," Haaretz, December 16, 2002.6: DOMINATING PUBLIC DISCOURSE1. Robert H. Trice, "Interest Groups and the Foreign Policy Process: U.S. Policy inthe MiddleEast," Sage Professional Papers in International Studies, ed. V. Davis and M. East(BeverlyHills, CA: Sage Publications, 1976), 63-65.2. Eric Alterman, "Intractable Foes, Warring Narratives," MSNBC.com, March 28, 2002.3. Cathy Young of Reason magazine protested her inclusion on Alterman's list of"reflexively"pro-Israel pundits and Alterman acknowledged the error.4. Kristof began by observing there was "no serious political debate among eitherDemocratsor Republicans about our policy toward Israelis and Palestinians" and suggested thatthiswas bad for all parties involved, including Israel itself. This point should havebeen uncontroversial,but

it earned a letter of protest from the Anti-Defamation League and his viewswere described as a "one-sided blame-Israel approach" by CAMERA, a pro-Israel mediawatchdog group. See his "Talking About Israel," New York Times, March 18, 2007;"Letterto the Editor," New York Times, March 19, 2007, www.adl.org/media_watch/newspapers/20070319_NYTimes.htm; and CAMERA, "Kristof's Blame-Israel Rant," March 21, 2007,www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=2&x_outlet= 139&x_article=l 303.5. Quoted in Bret Stephens, "Eye on the Media by Bret Stephens: Bartley's Journal,"JerusalemPost, November 22, 2002.6. Jerome N. Slater, "Muting the Alarm: The New York Times and theIsraeli-Palestinian Conflict,

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strike if it did not abandon itsnuclear programand that it made more sense to pursue a grand bargain with Tehran. Indyk held theoppositeview. Leverett also disagreed with Indyk's view that the assassination of PrimeMinister Rafic Hariri of Lebanon provided an excellent opportunity to undermineSyrianPresident Bashar al-Assad. Leverett was forced out of Brookings, partly because ofhis disagreements

with Indyk and partly because he criticized Saban Center Research DirectorKenneth Pollack's advocacy of the Iraq war. Interview with authors, October 17, 2006;correspondencewith authors, June 6, 2007, June 12, 2007.28.The 2005 forum was held in Israel and did feature one session with PalestinianPresidentMahmoud Abbas, Finance Minister Salam Fayad, and Civil Affairs Minister MohamedDahlan.29.Foxman is quoted in David E. Sanger, "Iran's Leader Relishes 2nd Chance to MakeWaves,"New York Times, September 21, 2006. Also see "Ahmadinejad Talks to U.S. Think Tank,"Washington Post, September 21, 2006; and Eli Lake, "N.Y.'s Jewish Leaders RejectOffer toMeet Iran's Leader," New York Sun, September 18, 2006.30.James D. Besser, "Turning Up Heat in Campus Wars," Jewish Week, July 25, 2003; RonaldS.Lauder and Jay Schottenstein, "Back to School for Israel Advocacy," Forward, November14,2003; and Rachel Pomerance, "Israel Forces Winning Campus Battle, Say StudentsAttendingAIPAC Meeting,"7TA.org, December 31, 2002.31.Michal Lando, "Christians to Train in Israel Advocacy," Jerusalem Post, May 14,2007.32.Besser, "Turning Up Heat"; and Pomerance, "Israel Forces Winning." In the spring of2005,AIPAC hosted one hundred student government presidents (eighty of whom were notJewish)at its annual conference. Nathaniel Popper, "Pro-Israel Groups: Campuses Improving,"Forward, June 24, 2005.33."Policy Conference Highlights," www.aipac.org/2841.htm.34.Jonathan S. Kessler and Jeff Schwaber, The AIPAC College Guide: Exposing theAnti-IsraelCampaign on Campus, special ed. for the Hillel Foundation (Washington, DC: AIPAC,1984); and Kristine McNeil, "The War on Academic Freedom," Nation, November 11,2002.35.Michael Dobbs, "Middle East Studies Under Scrutiny in U.S.," Washington Post, January13,2004; Michèle Goldberg, "Osama University?" Salon.com, November 6, 2003; KristineMcNeil,"The War on Academic Freedom," Nation, November 11, 2002; and Zachary Lockman,"Behind the Battle over US Middle East Policy," Middle East Report Online, January2004.36.Tanya Schevitz, "'Dossiers' Dropped from Web Blacklist; Mideast Center SaysDenouncingProfessors Was Counterproductive," Saw Francisco Chronicle (online), October 3,2002.37."The International Studies in Higher Education Act (HR 3077)," text fromwww.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h 108-3077.38.Stanley Kurtz, "Anti-Americanism in the Classroom," National Review Online, May 16,

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70. As discussed in Chapter 4, we regard the term "Jewish lobby" as both misleading

and inappropriate,as it implies that all Jews support the lobby's positions and ignores the non-Jewishindividuals and groups that are also part of this loose coalition.71. Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "A Shameful Contagion of Anti-Semitism in Europe," U.S.News &World Report, October 7, 2002; and Jeff Jacoby, "The Cancer of Anti-Semitism inEurope,"Boston Globe, March 21, 2004.72. Quoted in Tony Judt, "Goodbye to All That?" Nation, January 3, 2005.73. Anti-Defamation League, "Attitudes Toward Jews, Israel and thePalestinian-Israeli Conflictin Ten European Countries," April 2004; and Pew Global Attitudes Project, A YearAfter IraqWar. Mistrust of America in Europe Even Higher, Muslim Anger Persists (Washington,DC:Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, March 16, 2004), 4-5, 26. On theADLsurvey, see "ADL Survey Finds Some Decrease in Anti-Semitic Attitudes in TenEuropeanCountries," ADL press release, April 26, 2004; and Shlomo Shamir, "Poll ShowsDecrease inAnti-Semitic Views in Europe," Haaretz, April 27, 2004. These findings had virtuallyno effecton pro-Israel pundits, who continued to argue that anti-Semitism was rampant inEurope.See, for example, Daniel J. Goldhagen, "Europe's Toothless Reply to Anti-Semitism:Conference Fails to Build Tools to Fight a Rising Sickness," Los Angeles Times, April30,2004; and Charles Krauthammer, "The Real Mideast 'Poison,'" Washington Post, April30,2004.74. Martin Peretz, "Cambridge Diarist: Regrets," New Republic, April 22, 2002, 50.75. The data in this paragraph are from "Anti-Semitism in Europe: Is It ReallyRising?" Economist,May 4, 2002.76. Quoted in Marc Perelman, "Community Head: France No More Antisemitic Than U.S.,"Forward, August 1, 2003. Also see Francois Bujon de l'Estang, "A Slander on France,"WashingtonPost, June 22, 2002; and "French President Accuses Israel of Conducting Anti-French Campaign," Haaretz, May 12, 2002.77. "French Police: Anti-Semitism in France Sharply Decreased in 2005," Haaretz,January 19,2006.78. "French Protest for Murdered Jew," BBC News (online), February 26, 2006; andMichelZlotowski, "Large Memorial Held for Parisian Jew," Jerusalem Post, February 23,2006.79. Avi Beker, "The Eternally Open Gate," Haaretz, January 11, 2005; Josef Joffe, "ABoom, ifNot a Renaissance, in Modern-Day Germany," Forward, July 25, 2003; Nathaniel Popper,"Immigrant Policy Eyed as German Community Swells," Forward, July 25, 2003; andEliahuSalpeter, "Jews from the CIS Prefer Germany to the Jewish State," Haaretz, May 28,2003.Also, the Times of London reported in the spring of 2005 that "an estimated 100,000Jewshave returned to Russia in the past few years, sparking a dramatic renaissance ofJewish lifein a country with a long history of anti-Semitism." Jeremy Page, "Once Desperate toLeave,Now Jews Are

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81. "Study: Anti-Semitic Attacks Hit Record Level in Britain in 2006," Haaretz,February 1,2007; and Community Security Trust, "Antisemitic Incidents Report 2006," www.thecst.org.uk.82. Specifically, the London police reported that anti-Semitic attacks had dropped 25percentover five years and that "racist attacks on black, Asian, and Arab people in Londonare significantlyhigher." The Global Forum figures showed a slight (3 percent) decrease in anti-Semitic incidents from 2005 to 2006. Jonny Paul, "Sharp Rise in U.K. anti-Semitism?Numbers Don't Add Up for Everyone," JTA.org, February 22, 2007.83. For examples of this argument, Phyllis Chesler, The New Anti-Semitism: TheCurrent Crisisand What We Must Do About It (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Hillel Halkin, "TheReturnof Anti-Semitism: To Be Against Israel Is to Be Against the Jews," Wall StreetJournal,February 5, 2002; Barry Kosmin and Paul Iganski, "Judeophobia—Not Your Parents'Anti-Semitism," Haaretz, June 3, 2003; Amnon Rubinstein, "Fighting the NewAnti-Semitism,"Haaretz, December 2, 2003; Gabriel Schoenfeld, The Return of Anti-Semitism (SanFrancisco:Encounter Books, 2003); Natan Sharansky, "Anti-Semitism Is Our Problem,"Haaretz, August 10, 2003; Yair Sheleg, "A World Cleansed of the Jewish State,"Haaretz,April 18, 2002; and Yair Sheleg, "Enemies, a Post-National Story," Haaretz, March 8,2003.For criticism of this perspective, see Akiva Eldar, "Anti-Semitism Can BeSelf-Serving,"Haaretz, May 3, 2002; Brian Klug, "The Myth of the New Anti-Semitism," Nation,February2, 2004; Ralph Nader, "Criticizing Israel Is Not Anti-Semitism," CounterPunch.org,October16/17, 2004; Reframing Anti-Semitism: Alternative Jewish Perspectives, ed. HenriPicciotto and Mitchell Plitnick (Oakland, CA: Jewish Voice for Peace, 2004); andFinkelstein,Beyond Chutzpah, chaps. 1-3.84. Helen Nugent, "Chief Rabbi Flays Church over Vote on Israel Assets," Times(London),February 17, 2006. Also see Bill Bowder, "Sacks Seeks Talks after Synod Vote onDisinvestment,"Church Times (online), February 17, 2006; "Bulldozer Motion 'Based on Ignorance,'"Church Times (online), February 10, 2006; Ruth Gledhill, "Church Urged to ReconsiderInvestmentswith Israel," Times (London), May 28, 2005; and Irene Lancaster, "AnglicansHave Betrayed the Jews," Moriel Ministries (UK) website,www.moriel.org/articles/israel/anglicans_have_betrayed_thejews.htm. Also "U.K. Chief Rabbi Attacks Anglicans overIsraelDivestment Vote," Haaretz, February 17, 2006.85.

That the Church of England was merely criticizing Israeli policy and not engagingin anti-Semitism is clearly reflected in the February 10, 2006, letter from the archbishop ofCanterbury,Dr. Rowan Williams, to the chief rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, explaining the church'sdecision on divestment. "Archbishop: Synod Call Was Expression of Concern," ChurchofEngland website, www.cofe.anglican.org/news/pr2006.html.86. Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, The New Anti-Semitism (New York:McGraw-Hill,1974). In their words, the "heart of the new anti-Semitism" was "a large measure ofindifferenceto the most profound apprehensions of the Jewish people, a blandness and apathy indealing with anti-Jewish behavior, a widespread incapacity or unwillingness tocomprehendthe necessity of the existence of Israel to Jewish safety and survival throughout

theworld" (324).87. According to the Perlmutters, "It was anti-Semitism's velvet glove that providedthe points forthe [Reagan] administration's victory [in the AWACS deal]." Nathan Perlmutter andRuth AnnPerlmutter, The Real Anti-Semitism in America (New York: Arbor House, 1982), 236.88. In the Perlmutters' words, "Today the interest of Jews are not so much threatenedby their familiarnemesis, crude anti-Semitism, as by a-Semitic governmental policies, the proponentsof which may be free of anti-Semitism." These policies include "thirst of Westerneconomiesfor recycled petrodollars," neo-isolationism, and compensatory group rights (such asaffirmativeaction), among others. And in their view, "Jews today face greater jeopardy fromquarterswhich though innocent of bigotry, nonetheless pose us greater danger than do our longtime,easily recognizable anti-Semitic nemeses. Unchallenged and unchecked, these issues insur

face appearance Semitically neutral, can hurt Jews and resisted as need be, can looseonceagain classical anti-Semitism." Real Anti-Semitism, 9, 231—32.

89. Quoted in Hillel Halkin, "The Return of Anti-Semitism," Commentary, February2002, 30.90. Natan Sharansky, "Anti-Semitism Is Our Problem," Haaretz, August 10, 2003. AlsoZuckerman,"Shameful Contagion."91. Peter Novick, The Holocaust in American Life (NewYork: Houghton Mifflin, 1999);JackWertheimer, "Jewish Organizational Life," in American Jewish Yearbook 1995 (NewYork:American Jewish Committee, 1995), 70; and Frank Rich, "The Booing of Wolfowitz," NewYork Times, May 11, 2002.92. Leon Wieseltier, "Hitler Is Dead: The Case Against Jewish Ethnic Panic," NewRepublic,May 27, 2002 (both Hentoff and Rosenbaum are quoted in this article). FormerUndersecretaryof State Stuart Eizenstat offered a similar caution in April 2007, writing that"while antisemitismhas not been extinguished, the gravity of the Holocaust has been imbedded onworld opinion. Levels of general antisemitic attitudes have declined sharply. Therehas beena successful decades-long Catholic-Jewish dialogue, with important statements by theVaticanthat diminish religious-based anti-Semitism . . . Most Western European countrieshaveHolocaust remembrance days, and several have Holocaust memorial museums . . .Virtuallyevery major European nation provides police protection for Jewish synagogues andreligiousschools. Antisemitic actions are met with firm responses, as in France, albeitbelatedly." StuartEizenstat, "The Dangers Are Great,

but It Is Not 1938," Forward, April 20, 2007.93. Yossi Beilin, "The Case for Carter," Forward, January 16, 2007.94. Prominent Israelis who have used the term include former Attorney General MichaelBenYair, deputy mayor of Jerusalem Meron Benvenisti, peace activist Uri Avnery, formerEducationMinister Shulamit Aloni, and a number of Israeli peace groups. See Joseph Lelyveld,"Jimmy Carter and Apartheid," New York Review of Books, March 29, 2007. On Tutu andKasrils, see Desmond Tutu and Ian Urbina, "Against Israeli Apartheid," Nation, June27,2002; and Jonny Paul, "South African Jewish Minister Sends Support to 'IsraelApartheidWeek' Organizers," Jerusalem Post, February 22, 2007.95. As Shmuel Rosner notes, Carter's critics "are almost all Jews," but as the YossiBeilin quotation

in the previous paragraph makes clear, not all Jews were critical of the formerpresident."The Carter Trap," Haaretz, January 15, 2007. On the very different reaction toCarteramong non-Jews, see M. J. Rosenberg, "Israel's Increased Isolation," Weekly OpinionColumn,Issue #308, Israel Policy Forum, Washington, DC, January 19, 2007.96. Foxman is quoted in James Besser, "Jewish Criticism of Carter Intensifies,"Jewish Week,December 15, 2006; and Martin Peretz, "Carter's Legacy," The Spine (New Republicweblog),November 28, 2006.97. Deborah Lipstadt, "Jimmy Carter's Jewish Problem," Washington Post, January 20,2007.98. "Carter Defends Book on Israel Conflict," Jerusalem Post, January 21, 2007.99. Specifically, Krauthammer referred to Fukuyama's argument as a "novel way ofJudaizingneoconservatism" and said that "his is not the crude kind [of argument], advanced byPatBuchanan and Malaysia's Mahathir Mohamad, among others, that Americanneoconservatives(read: Jews) are simply doing Israel's bidding, hijacking American foreign policy intheservice of Israel and the greater Jewish conspiracy. Fukuyama's take is more subtleand implicit."Despite the distinction, Krauthammer was clearly suggesting that Fukuyama was a"subtle" anti-Semite. For the exchange, see Francis Fukuyama, "The NeoconservativeMoment,"National Interest 76 (Summer 2004); Charles Krauthammer, "In Defense of DemocraticRealism," National Interest 77 (Fall 2004); Francis Fukuyama, "Letter," NationalInterest 78 (Winter 2004/05); and Charles Krauthammer, "Letter," National Interest79(Spring 2005).100. Eliot Cohen, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic," Washington Post, April 5, 2006; and EliLake, "DavidDuke Claims to Be Vindicated by a Harvard Dean," New York Sun, March 20, 2006.101. Anti-Defamation League, "Mearsheimer and Walt's Anti-Israel Screed: A RelentlessAssault

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102. William Kristol, "Anti-Judaism," Wall Street Journal, September 8, 2006; Ruth R.Wisse, "IsraelLobby," Wall Street Journal, March 22, 2006; and Shmuel Rosner, "Is Carter an Anti-Semite?" Haaretz, December 21, 2006.103. The quotes are from Alvin H.

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of Books, April 12, 2007; and "Diaspora Blues," Economist editorial, January 13,2007.106. Kristol, "Anti-Judaism." Kristol's solution is instead to accuse critics ofIsrael—includingus—of "bigotry" and being "anti-Jewish."INTRODUCTION TO PART II

1. For a good example of the conventional wisdom, see Nathan Guttman, "A MarriageCementedby Terror," Salon.com, January 24, 2006.7: THE LOBBY VERSUS THE PALESTINIANS1. Thomas Oliphant, "A Delicate Balance," Boston Globe, September 18, 2001; and JanePerlezand Patrick E. Tyler, "Before Attacks, U.S. Was Ready to Say It Backed PalestinianState," New York Times, October 2, 2001.2. Robert G. Kaiser, "Bush and Sharon Nearly Identical on Mideast Policy," WashingtonPost,February 9, 2003.3. Jane Perlez and and Katharine Q. Seelye, "U.S. Strongly Rebukes Sharon forCriticism ofBush, Calling It 'Unacceptable,'" New York Times, October 6, 2001. Also JohnDonnelly,"Nation Set to Push Sharon on Agreement," Boston Globe, October 10, 2001; LeeHockstader,"Sharon Apologetic over Row with U.S.," Washington Post, October 7, 2001; LeeHockstader and Daniel Williams, "Israel Says It Won't 'Pay Price' of Coalition,"WashingtonPost, September 18, 2001; "Israel's Opportunity," Los Angeles Times editorial,September 18,2001; and Jonathan Karp, "Sharon Cancels Peace Talks in Rebuff to U.S. Concerns,"WallStreet Journal, September 24, 2001.4. Julian Borger, "US Backs State for Palestine," Guardian, October 3, 2001 ; KurtEichenwald,"U.S. Jews Split on Washington's Shift on Palestinian State," New York Times, October5,2001; and Glenn Kessler, "Talking Points Aside, Bush Stance on Palestinian State IsNot aFirst," Washington Post, October 5, 2001. At the same time, Prime Minister Tony Blairmade"Britain's strongest endorsement yet of Palestinian statehood." Michael Dobbs, "BlairBacksCreation of Palestinian State," Washington Post, October 16, 2001.5. Hockstader, "Sharon Apologetic."6. James Bennet, "Sharon Invokes Munich in Warning U.S. on 'Appeasement,'" New YorkTimes, October 5, 2001; Perlez and Seelye, "U.S. Strongly Rebukes Sharon"; and Alan

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42. Netanyahu, "The Case for Toppling Saddam." Also see Benjamin Netanyahu, "U.S.MustBeat Saddam to the Punch," Chicago Sun-Times, September 17, 2002.43. See, for example, "Benjamin Netanyahu Testifies About Iraq to Congress," CNNLiveEvent, CNN.com, September 12, 2002; Jim Lobe, "Hawks Justify Iraq Strike as War forDemocracy," Inter Press Service, September 27, 2002; and Janine Zacharia,"Netanyahu:US Must Guarantee Israel's Safety from Iraqi Attack," Jerusalem Post, September 13,2002.44. Aluf Benn, "Background: Enthusiastic IDF Awaits War in Iraq," Haaretz, February17,2003; James Bennet, "Israel Says War on Iraq Would

Benefit the Region," New YorkTimes,February 27, 2003; and Chemi Shalev, "Jerusalem Frets as U.S. Battles Iraq WarDelays,"Forward, March 7, 2003.45. Quoted in James Bennet, "Clinton Redux," The Atlantic@Aspen weblog, July 8,2006.46. Asher Arian, "Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2002," Jaffee Centerfor StrategicStudies, Tel Aviv University, Memorandum no. 61, July 2002, 10, 34.47. Ephraim Yaar and Tamar Hermann, "Peace Index: Most Israelis Support the Attack onIraq,"Haaretz, March 6, 2003. Regarding Kuwait, a public opinion poll released in March2003found that 89.6 percent of Kuwaitis favored the impending war against Iraq. James

Morrison,"Kuwaitis Support War," Washington Times, March 18, 2003. In a poll taken in Israelinearly May 2007, 59 percent of the respondents said that the U.S. decision to invadeIraqwas correct. "Poll Shows That Israel Is a Staunch American Ally," Anti-DefamationLeaguepress release, May 18, 2007. By that time, most Americans had concluded that the warwasa tragic mistake.48. "America's Image Further Erodes, Europeans Want Weaker Ties: a Nine-CountrySurvey,"Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, Washington, DC, March 18, 2003.Alsosee Alan Travis and Ian Black, "Blair's Popularity Plummets," Guardian, February 18,2003.49. Gideon Levy, "A Deafening Silence," Haaretz, October 6, 2002.50. See Dan Izenberg, "Foreign Ministry Warns Israeli War Talk Fuels USAnti-Semitism," JerusalemPost, March 10, 2003, which makes clear that "the Foreign Ministry has receivedreports from the US" telling Israelis to be more circumspect because the U.S. mediaisportraying Israel as "trying to goad the administration into war."51. Quoted in Dana Milbank, "Group Urges Pro-Israel Leaders Silence on Iraq,"WashingtonPost, November 27, 2002.52. David Horovitz, "Sharon Warns Colleagues Not to Discuss Iraq Conflict," IrishTimes,March 12, 2003. Also see James Bennet, "Threats and Responses: Israel's Role; NotUrgingWar, Sharon Says," New York Times, March 11, 2003; and Aluf Benn, "Sharon Says U.S.Should Also Disarm Iran, Libya and Syria," Haaretz, February 18, 2003.53. The influence of the neoconservatives and their allies was widely reflectedbefore the warand is clearly reflected in the following articles, all written before or just afterthe war began:Joel Beinin, "Pro-Israel Hawks and the Second Gulf War," Middle East Report Online,April 6, 2003; Elisabeth Bumiller and Eric Schmitt, "On the Job and at Home,InfluentialHawks' 30-Year Friendship Evolves," New York Times, September 11, 2002; Kathleen andBill Christison, "A Rose by Another Name: The Bush Administration's Dual Loyalties,"CounterPunch.org, December 13, 2002; Robert Dreyfuss, "The Pentagon Muzzles theCIA,"American Prospect, December 16, 2002; Michael Elliott and James Carney, "First Stop,Iraq,"Time, March 31, 2003; Seymour Hersh, "The Iraq Hawks," New Yorker, December 24-31,2001; Michael Hirsh, "Hawks, Doves and Dubya," Newsweek, September 2, 2002; GlennKessler, "U.S. Decision on Iraq Has Puzzling Past," Washington Post, January 12,2003;Joshua M. Marshall, "Bomb Saddam?" Washington Monthly, June 2002; Dana Milbank,"White House Push for Iraqi Strike Is on Hold," Washington Post, August 18, 2002;SusanPage, "Showdown with Saddam: The Decision to Act," USA Today, September 11, 2002;SamTanenhaus, "Bush's Brain Trust," Vanity Fair (online), July 2003; Patrick E. Tylerand ElaineSciolino,

"Bush Advisers Split on Scope of Retaliation," New York Times, September20,2001 ; and Jason A. Vest, "The Men from JINSA and CSP," Nation, September 2/9, 2002.54. Janine Zacharia, "All the President's Middle East Men," Jerusalem Post, January19, 2001.

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55. "Rally Unites Anguished Factions Under Flag of 'Stand with Israel,'" Forward,April 19,2002; and "Forward 50," Forward, November 15, 2002.56. John McCaslin, "Israeli-Trained Cops," Washington Times, November 5, 2002; BretStephens, "Man of the Year," Jerusalem Post (Rosh Hashana Supplement), September 26,2003; and Janine Zacharia, "Invasive Treatment," ibid. Other useful pieces onWolfowitz include

Peter J. Boyer, "The Believer," New Yorker, November 1, 2004; Michael Dobbs, "ForWolfowitz, a Vision May Be Realized," Washington Post, April 7, 2003; James Fallows,"TheUnilateralist," Atlantic, March 2002; Bill Keller, "The Sunshine Warrior," New YorkTimesMagazine, September 22, 2002; and "Paul Wolfowitz, Velociraptor," Economist, February7,2002.57. See, for example, Douglas J. Feith, "The Inner Logic of Israel's Negotiations:WithdrawalProcess, Not Peace Process," Middle East Quarterly 3, no. 1 (March 1996); andDouglasFeith, "A Strategy for Israel," Commentary, September 1997. For useful discussions ofFeith sviews, see Jeffrey Goldberg, "A Little Learning: What Douglas Feith Knew and When HeKnew It," New Yorker, May 9, 2005; Jim Lobe, "Losing Feith, or Is the Bush TeamSheddingIts Sharper Edges?" Daily Star (online), January 31, 2005; James J. Zogby, "ADangerous Appointment:Profile of Douglas Feith, Undersecretary of Defense Under Bush," Middle EastInformation Center, April 18, 2001; and "Israeli Settlements: Legitimate,DemocraticallyMandated, Vital to Israel's Security and, Therefore, in U.S. Interest," Center forSecurity Policy,Transition Brief no. 96-T 130, December 17, 1996. Note that the title of the latterpiece,which was published by an organization in the lobby, says that what is in Israel'sinterest is inAmerica's national interest. In "Losing Feith," Lobe writes, "In 2003, when Feith,who wasstanding in for Rumsfeld at an interagency 'Principals' Meeting' on the Middle East,concludedhis remarks on behalf of the Pentagon, according to the Washington insidernewsletter,The Nelson Report, [National Security Adviser Condoleezza] Rice said, 'Thanks Doug,but when we want the Israeli position we'll invite the ambassador.'"58. "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm" was prepared for theInstitute forAdvanced Strategic and Political Studies in Jerusalem and published in June 1996. Acopycan be found at www.iasps.org/stratl.htm.59. Akiva Eldar, "Perles of Wisdom for the Feithful," Haaretz, October 1, 2002.60. Packer, Assassins 'Gate, 32.61. "Israel's UN Ambassador Slams Qatar, Praises U.S. Envoy Bolton," Haaretz, May 23,2006.Also see "Bolton Is Israel's Secret Weapon, Says Gillerman," BigNewsNetwork.com,November18, 2006; and Ori Nir, "Senate Probes Bolton's Pro-Israel Efforts," Forward, May 6,2005.62. Marc Perelman, "Siding with White House, Groups Back Bolton," Forward, November17,2006; and "Dear John," Forward editorial, December 8, 2006.63. Ori Nir, "Libby Played Leading Role on Foreign Policy Decisions," Forward,November 4,2005.64. "He Tarries: Jewish Messianism and the Oslo Peace," Rennert Lecture for 2002.Krauthammerfiercely defends Israel at every turn in his columns.65. Asia Aydintasbas, "The Midnight Ride of James Woolsey,"

Salon.com, December 20,2001;Anne E. Kornblut and Bryan Bender, "Cheney Link of Iraq, 9/11 Dismissed," BostonGlobe,September 16, 2003; David E. Sanger and Robin Toner, "Bush and Cheney Talk StronglyofQaeda Links with Hussein," New York Times, June 18, 2004; and R. James Woolsey, "TheIraq Connection," Wall Street Journal, October 18, 2001.66. Goldberg added that "among Jewish lobbyists in the Beltway, support for theimpending waris almost taken for granted—several are puzzled by the very suggestion that any kindofstrenuous opposition to an Iraq invasion might emerge." Michelle Goldberg, "Why

AmericanJewish Groups Support War with Iraq," Salon.com, September 14, 2002.67. "An Unseemly Silence," Forward editorial, May 7, 2004.68. Nacha Cattan, "Resolutions on Invasion Divide Jewish Leadership," Forward,October 11,2002; Laurie Goodstein, "Threats and Responses: American Jews; Divide Among JewsLeadsto Silence on Iraq War," New York Times, March 15, 2003; and Milbank, "Group Urges."

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69. Matthew E. Berger, "Jewish Groups Back U.S. Stand on Iraq," Jewish Journal(online), October18, 2002; and Jewish Council for Public Affairs, "Statement on Iraq," adopted by theJCPA Board of Directors, October 2002.70. Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "No Time for Equivocation," U.S. News & World Report,August 26/September 2, 2002. Also see Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "No More Cat and Mouse," U.S.News &• World Report, October 28, 2002; Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "Clear and CompellingProof," U.S. News & World Report, February 10, 2003; and Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "TheHigh Price of Waiting," U.S. News & World Report, March 10, 2003.71. Both quotes are from Goldberg, "Why American Jewish Groups."72. Gary Rosenblatt, "The Case for War Against Saddam," Jewish Week, December 13,2002.Also see Gary Rosenblatt, "Hussein Asylum," Jewish Week, August 23, 2002.73. Ron Kampeas, "Cheney: Iran, Iraq a Package Deal," JTA.org, March 13, 2007.74. Nathan Guttman, "Background: AIPAC and the Iraqi Opposition," Haaretz, April 7,2003.Also see Dana Milbank, "For Israel Lobby Group, War Is Topic A, Quietly," WashingtonPost,April 1, 2003.75. David Twersky, "A Bittersweet Affair for AIPAC," New York Sun, January 23, 2003.On theADL, see Cattan, "Resolutions on Invasion"; Nacha Cattan, "Jewish Groups Pressed toLine Up on Iraq," Forward, August 23, 2002; and Nathan Guttman, "Groups Mum on Iraq,Despite Antiwar Tide," Forward, March 2, 2007.76. Jeffrey Goldberg, "Real Insiders: A Pro-Israel Lobby and an FBI Sting," NewYorker, July 4,2005. Near East Report (NER), AIPAC's biweekly publication dealing with Middle Eastissues,is filled with articles dealing with Iraq in the months before the war began.Althoughnone explicitly calls for invading Iraq, they all portray Saddam as an especiallydangerousthreat, leaving the reader with little doubt that both Israel and the United Stateswill be inserious trouble if he is not toppled from power. See, for example, "Saddam'sDiversion,"NER, October 7, 2002; interview with Ze'ev Schiff, NER, October 21, 2002; interviewwithAmatzia Baram, NER, February 25, 2002; interview with Amatzia Baram, NER, October 7,2002; interview with Kenneth M. Pollack, NER, September 23, 2002;

"Arming Iraq,"NER,July 1, 2002; and "Backing Saddam," NER, February 3, 2003.77. John Bresnahan, "GOP Turns to Israeli Lobby to Boost Iraq Support," Roll Call(online),October 6, 2003.78. Matthew E. Berger, "Bush Makes Iraq Case in AIPAC Appearance," Deep South JewishVoice (online), May 11, 2004.79. David Horovitz, "Editor's Notes: Wading into the Great Debate," Jerusalem Post,March 15,2007. According to Ron Kampeas, Cheney's "message was not received enthusiastically.Only about one-third to one-half of the audience . . . applauded politely." See"Cheney:Iran, Iraq a Package Deal." Similarly, Nathan Guttman wrote that Cheney's speech"receiveda lukewarm welcome." See "Cheney Links Action on Iran to Winning Iraq," Forward,March 16, 2007. However, writing in Salon, Gregory Levey noted that "Cheney got awarmreception and forceful applause." See "Inside America's Powerful Israel Lobby,"Salon.com,

March 16, 2007.80. On the reception Boehner and Pelosi received, see Guttman, "Cheney Links Action";Levey,"Inside"; and Ian Swanson, "Pelosi Hears Boos at AIPAC," The Hill (online), March 13,2007.81. Guttman, "Groups Mum on Iraq."82. Ibid.; and Jeffrey M. Jones, "Among Religious Groups, Jewish Americans MostStrongly OpposeWar," Gallup News Service, February 23, 2007.83. Shortly before the United States invaded Iraq, Congressman James P. Moran createda stirwhen he said, "If it were not for the strong support of the Jewish community for thiswarwith Iraq, we would not be doing this." Quoted in Hsu, "Moran Said." However, Moranmisspoke,because there was not widespread support for the war in the Jewish community. Heshould have said, "If it were not for the strong support of the neoconservatives andthe leadershipof the Israel lobby for this war with Iraq, we would not be doing this."84. Samuel G. Freedman, "Don't Blame Jews for This War," USA Today, April 2, 2003.Also see

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James D. Besser, "Jews Souring on Iraq War," Jewish Week, September 24, 2004;Goodstein,"Threats and Responses"; and Ori Nir, "Poll Finds Jewish Political Gap," Forward,February4, 2005. The same situation obtained before the 1991 Gulf War. By the time Congressvotedto endorse the war on January 12, 1991, "the only significant Washington Jewishorganizationnot on record in favor of the administration's position was American Friends of PeaceNow,which favored the continuation of sanctions." Judis, "Jews and the Gulf," 13. Despitethelobby's efforts to make the 1991 war happen, however, a large portion of the AmericanJewishcommunity opposed the war, as was the case in 2003. For example, Jewish members ofthe House of Representatives voted 17-16 against the resolution authorizing war,while Jewishsenators voted 5-3 against it. Ibid., 14. This outcome reflects the fact that incontrast towhat happened in 2002—03, there was a serious debate in 1990-91 about whether to gotowar against Iraq, as well as the fact that the lobby sometimes takes positions thatare at oddswith a substantial portion of the American Jewish community.

85. The January 26, 1998, letter can be found on the website of the Project for theNew AmericanCentury, www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm; the February 19, 1998,letter can be found on the Iraq Watch website,www.iraqwatch.org/perspectives/rumsfeldopenletter.htm. For background on the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, seeJudis, "Jews and the Gulf," 12. Also see the May 29, 1998, letter to

Speaker of theHouseNewt Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott written under the auspices ofPNAC, www.newamericancentury.org/iraqletterl998.htm. The neoconservatives, it shouldbe emphasized, advocated invading Iraq to topple Saddam. See "The End ofContainment,"Weekly Standard, December 1, 1997; Zalmay M. Khalilzad and Paul Wolfowitz,"OverthrowHim," ibid.; Frederick W. Kagan, "Not by Air Alone," ibid.; and Robert Kagan, "A WaytoOust Saddam," Weekly Standard, September 28, 1998.86. A copy of the Iraq Liberation Act can be found atwww.iraqwatch.org/government/US/Legislation/ILA.htm.87. John Dizard, "How Ahmed Chalabi Conned the Neocons," Salon.com, May 4, 2004;"Iraqi

Myths," Jerusalem Post editorial, October 7, 1998; Seth Gitell, "Neocons Meet IsraelitoGain U.S. Backing," Forward, July 31, 1998; Kagan, "Way to Oust Saddam"; MartinKettle,"Pentagon Balks at 'Idiotic' Law Urging Bay of Pigs-type Invasion of Iraq," Guardian,October21, 1998; and Vernon Loeb, "Congress Stokes Visions of War to Oust Saddam; WhiteHouse Fears Fiasco in Aid to Rebels," Washington Post, October 20, 1998. On JINSA,see"Concrete Responses to Saddam," jinsa.org, Report no. 79, August 10, 1998; "ToOverthrowSaddam," jinsa.org, Report no. 82, October 2, 1998; "Spring 1998 BoardResolution—Iraq,"jinsa.org, March 22, 1998; and "Resolution in Support of the Iraqi Opposition,"jinsa.org,October 19, 1998.

88. See Clinton's comments after he signed the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998. Statementby thePresident, White House Press Office, October 31, 1998. Also see Kettle, "PentagonBalks";and Loeb, "Congress Stokes."89. Vernon Loeb, "Saddam's Iraqi Foes Heartened by Clinton," Washington Post,November 16,1998; Nicholas Lemann, "The Iraq Factor: Will the New Bush Team's Old Memories ShapeIts Foreign Policies?" New Yorker, January 22, 2001; and Robert Litwak, Rogue StatesandU.S. Foreign Policy (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), chap. 4.90. Packer, Assassins' Gate, 41.91. Jane Perlez, "Capitol Hawks Seek Tougher Line on Iraq," New York Times, March 7,2001;and "Have Hawks Become Doves?" Washington Times editorial, March 8, 2001. Also seeStefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and theGlobalOrder (NewYork: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 129-31.92. Richard A. Clarke, Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror (New York:FreePress, 2004); and Ron Suskind, The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House,andthe Education of Paul O'Neill (NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 2004).93. Bob Woodward, Plan of Attack (NewYork: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 12. Also seeLemann,

"Iraq Factor"; and Eric Schmitt and Steven Lee Meyers, "Bush Administration WarnsIraqon Weapons Programs," New York Times, January 23, 2001.

94. She also noted that if Iraq did get WMD, the appropriate U.S. response would be a"clearand classical statement of deterrence—if they do acquire WMD, their weapons will beunusablebecause any attempt to use them will bring national obliteration." Condoleezza Rice,"Promoting the National Interest," Foreign Affairs 79, no. 1 (January/February 2000):60-62.95. Timothy Noah, "Dick Cheney,

Dove," Slate.com, October 16, 2002; Adam Meyerson,"Calm After Desert Storm," interview with Dick Cheney, Policy Reiriew 65 (Summer1993).96. Quoted in Kessler, "U.S. Decision on Iraq Has Puzzling Past." Elliott and Carney("FirstStop, Iraq") report that neoconservatives like William Kristol were upset when Cheneywaschosen as Bush's running mate, because of Cheney's position on ending the first GulfWar.But after 9/11, says Kristol, "neoconservatives happily consider him afellow-traveler."'97. Elliott and Carney, "First Stop, Iraq"; Glenn Kessler and Peter Slavin, "CheneyIs Fulcrumof Foreign Policy," Washington Post, October 13, 2002; Kessler, "U.S. Decision onIraq Has

Puzzling Past"; and "Vice President Dick Cheney Talks About Bush's Energy Plan,"interviewwith Tim Russert on NBC's Meet the Press, May 20, 2001. Although Cheney's views onconquering Iraq fundamentally changed after 9/11, this apparently did not happenovernight. See "The Vice President Appears on Meet the Press with Tim Russert," CampDavid, Maryland, Office of the White House Press Secretary, September 16, 2001.Cheney's response to specific questions about Iraq does not indicate that he hadchangedhis thinking about the need to topple Saddam five days after the Twin Towers fell.98. Both Kagan quotations are from Packer, Assassins' Gate, 38. Also see similarcomments byPacker himself in ibid., 32.99. Woodward, Plan of Attack, 25-26.100. Page, "Showdown with Saddam."101. Elliott and Carney, "First Stop, Iraq." Woodward describes Wolfowitz as "like adrum thatwould not stop." Plan of Attack, 22.102. Woodward, Plan of Attack, 1-44.103. Regarding the neoconservatives' influence on Cheney, see Elliott and Carney,"First Stop,Iraq"; Page, "Showdown with Saddam"; Michael Hirsh, "Bernard Lewis Revisited,"WashingtonMonthly, November 2004; Frederick Kempe, "Lewis's 'Liberation' Doctrine for MideastFaces New Tests," Wall Street Journal, December 13, 2005; and Caria Anne Robbinsand Jeanne Cummings, "How Bush Decided That Hussein Must Be Ousted from AtopIraq," Wall Street Journal, June 14, 2002. On Ajami in particular, see Adam Shatz,"The NativeInformant," Nation, April 28, 2003.104. Jacob Weisberg, "Are Neo-cons History?" Financial Times, March 14, 2007. Thisarticlemakes clear that Cheney and Lewis have a close relationship.105. Woodward succinctly describes Libby's influence in Plan of Attack (48—49):"Libby hadthree formal titles. He was chief of staff to Vice President Cheney; he was alsonational securityadviser to the vice president; and he was finally an assistant to President Bush. Itwasa trifecta of positions probably never held before by a single person. Scooter was apowercenter unto himself . . . Libby was one of only two people who were not principals toattendthe National Security Council meetings with the president and the separateprincipalsmeetings chaired by Rice." Also see ibid., 50-51, 288-92, 300-301, 409-10; BumillerandSchmitt, "On the Job and at Home"; Karen Kwiatkowski, "The New Pentagon Papers,"Salon.com, March 10, 2004; and Tyler and Sciolino, "Bush Advisers Split."106. Tyler and Sciolino, "Bush Advisers Split." Also see Bumiller and Schmitt, "Onthe Job andat Home"; and William Safire, "Phony War II," New York Times, November 28, 2002.107. On Cheney's significant influence in the Bush administration, see JeanneCummings andGreg Hitt, "In Iraq Drama, Cheney Emerges as President's War Counselor," Wall StreetJournal, March 17, 2003; Mark Hosenball, Michael Isikoff,

and Evan Thomas, "Cheney'sLong Path to War," Newsweek, November 17, 2003; Kessler and Slavin, "Cheney Is Ful

crum"; Barbara Slavin and Susan Page, "Cheney Rewrites Roles in Foreign Policy," USAToday,July 29, 2002; and Woodward, Plan of Attack, 27-30.

108. Kessler, "U.S. Decision on Iraq Has Puzzling Past"; and Woodward, Plan ofAttack, 410. Alsosee ibid., 164-65,409.109. Quoted in Eric Schmitt, "Pentagon Contradicts General on Iraq Occupation Force'sSize,"New York Times, February 28, 2003.110. "This Goes Beyond Bin Laden," jinsa.org, September 13, 2001. Also see Vest, "TheMenfrom JINSA and CSP."

111. This letter was published in the Weekly Standard, October 1, 2001. Among thesignatorieswere William Bennett, Eliot Cohen, Aaron Friedberg, Donald Kagan, Robert Kagan,JeaneKirkpatrick, William Kristol, Charles Krauthammer, Richard Perle, Norman Podhoretz,Stephen Solarz, and Leon Wieseltier.112. Charles Krauthammer, "The War: A Road Map," Washington Post, September 28, 2001; andRobert Kagan and William Kristol, "The Right War," Weekly Standard, October 1, 2001.Alsosee "War Aims," Wall Street Journal editorial, September 20, 2001.113. Michael Barone, "War by Ultimatum," U.S. News & World Report, October 1, 2001.Alsosee Bill Gertz, "Iraq Suspected of Sponsoring Terrorist Attacks," Washington Times,September21, 2001; "Drain the Ponds of Terror," Jerusalem Post editorial, September 25, 2001;William Safire, "The Ultimate Enemy," New York Times, September 24, 2001 ; andMortimer B.Zuckerman, "A Question of Priorities," U.S. News &• World Report, October 8, 2001.114. The April 3, 2002, letter can be found atwww.newamericancentury.org/Bushletter040302.htm.115. Daniel Byman, Kenneth M. Pollack, and Gideon Rose, "The Rollback Fantasy,"Foreign Affairs78, no. 1 (January/February 1999).116. Kenneth M. Pollack, The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq (New York:RandomHouse, 2002); Kenneth M. Pollack, "Why Iraq Can't Be Deterred," New York Times,September26, 2002; Kenneth M. Pollack, "A Last Chance to Stop Iraq," New York Times, February21, 2003; Martin S. Indyk and Kenneth M. Pollack, "How Bush Can Avoid theInspections Trap," New York Times, January 27, 2003; and Martin S. Indyk and KennethM.Pollack, "Lock and Load," Los Angeles Times, December 19, 2002.117. William Kristol, "The Axis of Appeasement," Weekly Standard, August 26/September2, 2002;Robert Bartley, "Thinking Things Over: What We Learned," Wall Street Journal,September9, 2002; Michael Ledeen, "Scowcroft Strikes Out," National Review Online, August 6,2002;George Melloan, "Who Really Doubts That Saddam's Got to Go," Wall Street Journal,September10, 2002; John O'Sullivan, "Chamberlain Deserves an Apology: Scowcroft, Hagel,and Raines Are No Chamberlains," National Review Online, September 3, 2002; "This IsOpposition? There Is No Revolt in the GOP Against Bush's Iraq Policy," Wall StreetJournaleditorial, August 19, 2002; and "Who Is Brent Scowcroft?" New York Sun editorial,August19, 2002. None of the targets of the neoconservatives' ire were advocatingappeasement ofIraq but instead favored containment over war.118. William Safire, "Our 'Relentless' Liberation," New York Times, October 8, 2001.Also seeWilliam Safire, "Saddam and Terror," New York Times, August 22, 2002; and WilliamSafire,"Big Mo," New York Times, November 19, 2001.119.

Robert Kagan, "On to Phase II," Washington Post, November 27, 2001; Robert KaganandWilliam Kristol, "What to Do About Iraq," Weekly Standard, January 21, 2002; andSafire,"Saddam and Terror."120. Robert Kagan and William Kristol, "The U.N. Trap?" Weekly Standard, November 18,2002;Charles Krauthammer, "A Costly Charade at the U.N.," Washington Post, February 28,2003; George F. Will, "Stuck to the U.N. Tar Baby," Washington Post, September 19,2002;and William Safire, "The French Connection," New York Times, March 14, 2003.121. Krauthammer, "Our First Move." Also see Reuel Marc Gerecht, "A Necessary War,"WeeklyStandard, October 21, 2002; and Charles Krauthammer, "Where Power Talks," WashingtonPost, January 4, 2002.

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extendedIsraeli law to the territory of the Golan. It does not contain the word "annexation,"however,or refer to Israeli "sovereignty" over the heights. During the Knesset debate on thelegislation,Prime Minister Menachem Begin responded to a critic by saying, "You use the wordannexation, but I am not using it." Ian S. Lustick, "Has Israel Annexed EastJerusalem?"Middle East Policy 5, no. 1 (January 1997); and "The Golan Heights Law,"www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Peace+Process/Guide+to+the+Peace+Process/Golan+Heights+Law.htm.

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1. On this point, see Robert J. Art, A Grand Strategy for America (Ithaca: CornellUniversityPress, 2004), 45-46.

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2. This statement may seem surprising, given the tendency for Americans simply toassumethat Israel's security is vital to our own. In 2000, for example, a self-appointedcommissionof prominent foreign policy experts reported that preserving Israel as a free statewas a "vital"U.S. interest, but the commission never explained why this was so or how Israel'sfatewould affect U.S. security or well-being. More sensibly, Robert Art asserts that"Israel haslittle strategic value to the United States and is in many ways a strategicliability. Nonetheless,America's ties with Israel run deep, the U.S. affinity with another democracy isstrong,and the moral commitment to its preservation is clear." See Commission on America'sNationalInterests, America's National Interests (Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center for Scienceand International Affairs, 2000); and Art, Grand Strategy for America, 137.3. The elements of offshore balancing are spelled out in Christopher Layne, "FromPreponderanceto Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," International Security 22,no. 1 (Summer 1997); John J. Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics(NewYork:Norton, 2001), chap. 7; and Stephen M. Walt, Taming American Power: The GlobalResponseto U.S. Primacy (NewYork: Norton, 2005), 222-23, 235-36.4. On this point, see Robert A. Pape, Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of SuicideTerrorism(NewYork: Random House, 2005).5. James A. Baker III and Lee H. Hamilton, co-chairs, The Iraq Study Group Report(Washington,DC: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2006), 39.6. Hussein

Agha and Robert Malley, "The Road from Mecca," New York Review of Books,May 10, 2007, 43. Agha and Malley also write, "Nor is there much ideologicalenthusiasmremaining for a two-state solution. Israelis accept it and most believe it isinevitable, butgone is the passion or zeal" (44).7. See, for example, Ali Abunimah, One Country: A Bold Proposal to End theIsraeli-PalestinianImpasse (NewYork: Metropolitan Books, 2006); Josef Asevar, "Mideast Solution: AConfederation,"Jewish Journal (online), November 3, 2003; Meron Benvenisti, "What Kind ofBinationalState?" Haaretz, November 20, 2003; Richard Boudreaux, "Arabs Say Israel Is NotJust for Jews," Los Angeles Times, February 22, 2007; Tony Judt, "Israel: The

Alternative,"New York Review of Books, October 23, 2003; Isabel Kershner, "Noted Arab CitizensCall onIsrael to Shed Jewish Identity," New York Times, February 8, 2007; and Yaakov Lappin,"Academic:Israeli-Arabs Want End of Jewish State," Ynetnews.com, January 22, 2007.8. A May 2007 World Bank report sharply criticized Israel's system of internalcontrols andcheckpoints in the Occupied Territories, arguing that these impediments "havefragmentedthe territory into ever smaller and more disconnected cantons" and that "sustainableeconomicrecovery will remain elusive if large areas of the West Bank remain inaccessible foreconomic purposes and restricted movement remains the norm for the vast majority ofPalestinians and expatriate Palestinian investors." See World Bank Technical Team,"Movementand Access Restrictions in the West Bank: Uncertainty and Inefficiency in thePalestinianEconomy," May 9, 2007, 1-2, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/WestBankrestrictions9Mayfinal.pdf.9. In 2007, a BBC World Service poll of twenty-eight thousand people in twenty-sevencountriesfound that Israel had the worst image of the dozen countries listed, with 56 percentofrespondents reporting it was a "negative" influence in the world and only 17 percentsayingits influence was "positive." Iran's image was second worst: 54 percent negative and18 percentpositive. See Bradley Burston, "The BBC Poll: Israel as Satan's Bastard Child,"Haaretz, March 6, 2007; and "Israel, Iran Top 'Negative List,'" BBC News (online),March6, 2007. On the occupation's corrupting effects, see Dror Wahrman, "Is IsraelFallingApart?" History News Network, March 5, 2007, www.hnn.us/articles/35958.html.10. Shlomo Ben-Ami, Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy (NewYork:OxfordUniversity Press, 2006), 167.11. Yehuda Ben Meir and Dafna Shaked, "The People Speak: Israeli Public Opinion onNationalSecurity, 2005-2007," Memorandum no. 90 (Tel Aviv: Institute for National SecurityStudies, May 2007), 65-67.

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12. See the references in notes 28 and 29 in the Introduction.13. Rabbi Gold also quoted former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's warning to AmericanJewsthat "we cannot afford the luxury of public disagreement, or public criticism thatplays rightinto the hands of our enemies," and responded by saying, "I fail to understand how aprimeminister of a democratic nation with an active political opposition would attempt tosilenceJewish criticism abroad . . . Wherein the danger of American Jewish criticism? Is itthe criticismthat is harmful or the policies and actions that are criticized?"

Rabbi Ben-ZionGold,"The Diaspora and the Intifada: The Responsibility of American Jews," Boston Review,October/November 2002.14. "Diaspora Blues," Economist editorial, January 13, 2007, 14-15. Also see "SecondThoughtsAbout the Promised Land," ibid., 53—56.15. On this issue, see the recent column by Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Unionfor ReformJudaism, "When We Let John Hagee Speak for Us," Forward, May 18, 2007.16. Nathan Guttmann, "Dovish Groups Mull Mega-Merger in Bid to Build PeacePowerhouse,"Forward, May 30, 2007; Amiram Barkat, "New Pro-Israel Lobby as Alternative toAIPAC,"Haaretz, November 12, 2006; Bernd Debusmann, "Soros Adds Voice to Debate over IsraelLobby," Washington Post, April 15, 2007; Guy Dinmore, "Jewish Lobby for Peace with

PalestiniansGathers Pace in US," Financial Times, October 24, 2006; Gary Kamiya, "Can AmericanJews Unplug the Israel Lobby?" Salon.com, March 20, 2007; Gregory Levey, "TheOther Israel Lobby," Salon.com, December 19, 2006; and Gidon D. Remba, "Wanted: AModerate Pro-Israel Lobby," Haaretz, November 17, 2006.17. As of April 2007, the IJV declaration had garnered more than four hundredsignatures. Forthe declaration and list of signatories, see the Independent Jewish Voices website,www.ijv.org.uk. Also see Martin Hodgson, "British Jews Break Away from 'Pro-Israeli'Boardof Deputies," Independent, February 5, 2007; and Ned Temko, "Furor over JewishCritics'Challenge to State of Israel," Observer, February 4, 2007.18. Ben Weinthal, "German Jews Feud over Criticizing Israel," Forward, March 9, 2007.Alsosee Jason Frenkel, "Dissidents Set for Australia-Wide Media Campaign," AustralianJewishNews (online), March 1, 2007; Antony Loewenstein, My Israel Question (Carlton,Australia:Melbourne University Press, 2007); and "Why the 'Special Relationship' BetweenGermanyand Israel Has to Be Reconsidered," Manifesto of 25 German Peace Researchers,November15, 2006, www.tlaxcala.es/pp.asp?lg=en&reference=1569.

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